NEW WAVE WRESTLING

SPECIAL WORLD CHAMPIONS ISSUE!

WRESTLERS INVADE AFGHANISTAN * STEVE'S STORYLINE: A SCAM?

New Wave WRESTLING

JAN. 2003
No. 47

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

CHRIS JERICHO

DISCUSSES ROCK * RASSLIN'
FOZZY * FIGHTIN'

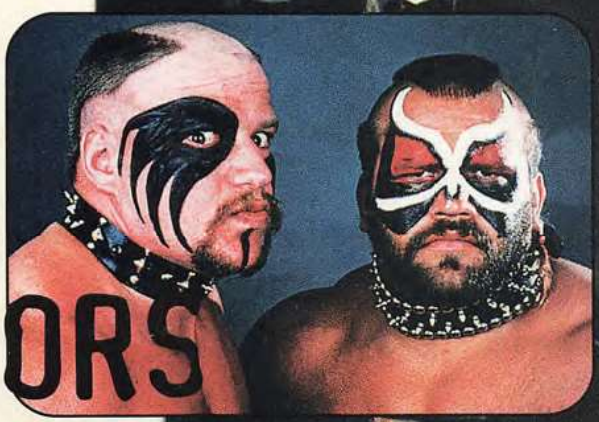
INTERVIEWS WITH

IWGP WORLD CHAMP

ANTONIO INOKI

SENSATIONAL SHERRI MARTEL

THE ROAD WARRIORS



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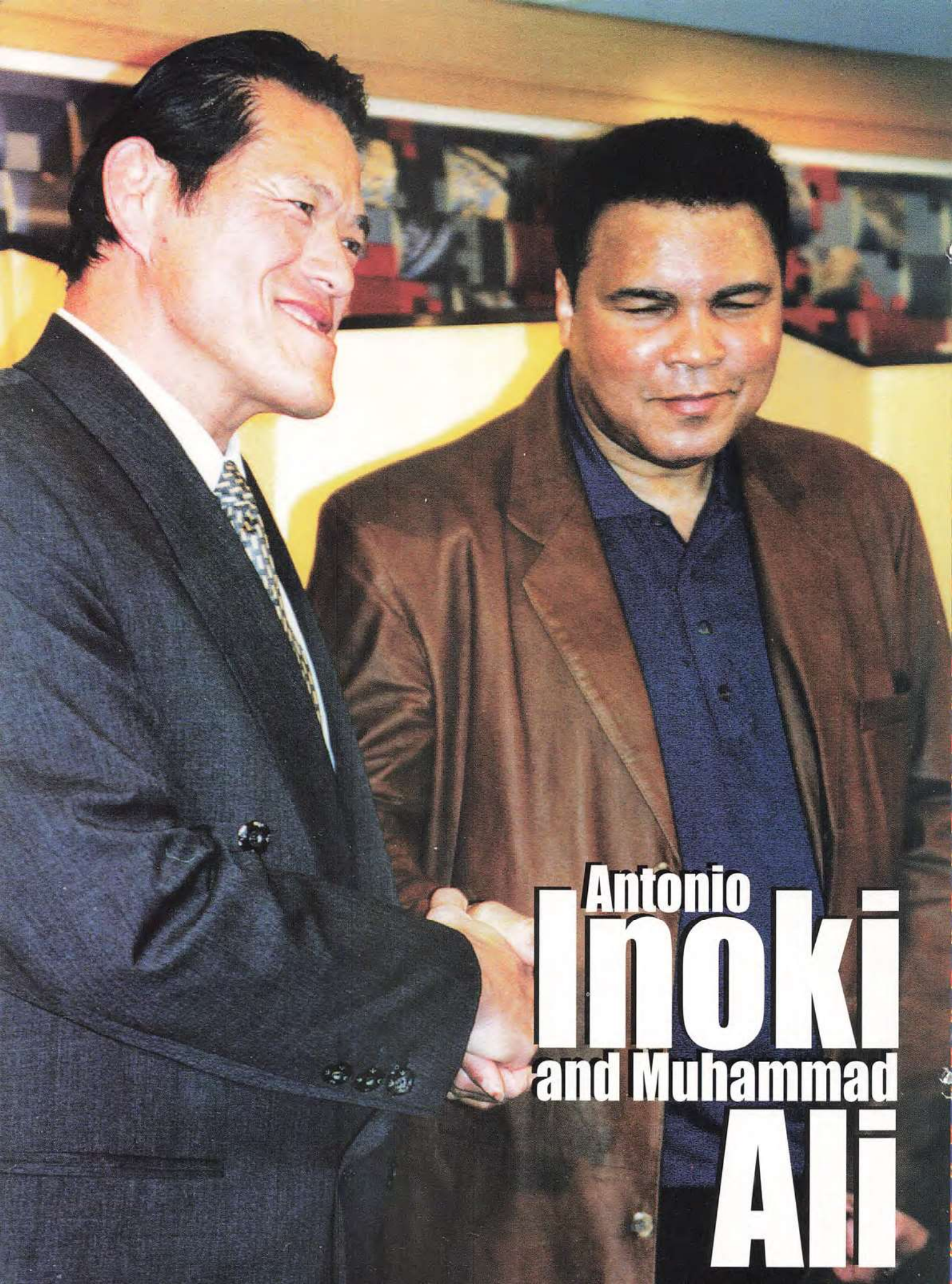
Antonio
Inoki
and Muhammad
Ali

New Wave Wrestling
THE WRESTLING AUTHORITY

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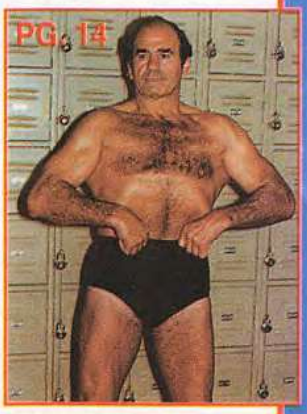

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Mat Musings by Publisher/Editor MICHAEL O'HARA

Hello, New Waver! Thanks, as always, for tagging in and joining us in our excursions over the battle-scarred grappling landscape. This issue features interviews with some of the all-time greatest World champions and is destined to be one of our favorites, but it's really not for us to judge. It's in your hands—our peerless, fearless ***New Waver*** and the thousands of other readers who make our efforts possible. We do it all for **YOU**! Let us know what you think of this issue along with suggestions for future features, interviews, and projects by sending your letters, postcards, and emails.

It's *Babble Royale* time. One year ago I presented an editorial in ***New Wave Wrestling #43*** which begged the question, "Is wrestling a trend or a fad?" I voiced the opinion that the sport had in fact positioned itself as a fad and was now paying the price for presenting this popular entertainment fare as a passing fancy rather than build upon its history which dates back to the late 1800s.

It's interesting to note that some five months later WWE CEO Linda McMahon commented on pro wrestling as fad or trend in a February edition of *The Wall Street Journal*, which took a peek at the mat league's ratings, ppv buy rates, and stock value—that's a whole lotta exogenous variables!

Following along the lines of the question I asked last year, I have a new question which came about—believe it or not—while I was waiting for a bus! It's seems that the WWE has come up with a new advertising campaign. (No, it's not *The New TNN* ad which I "saluted" in our last ish.) The huge banner ad appearing on New York City buses (and I have to assume elsewhere) promotes *The McManos*, which is apparently Titan Sport's answer to *The Sopranos*. The poster depicts Vince as the "made man" in the center, surrounded by Linda, Shane, Stephanie, and in the background, his pseudo son-in-law Triple-H. Does *The McManos* work as an ad campaign? The Clampetts would probably be more appropriate. (Hey, Vince, if you had a fraction of *The Beverly Hillbillies*' prime-time numbers from the 1960s, you would indeed be a made man!)

Anyway, here's my latest question, "Is professional wrestling a sport or a television program?" Can you think of any other sport or sports-related program which places the emphasis on the sizzle rather than the steak? I don't ever remember seeing the soap-opera antics of George Steinbrenner used as a selling point to get asses in the seats at Yankee Stadium. How about an ad campaign which touted the following—Come to an Atlanta Braves game. Hey, the team is owned by Ted Turner and Jane Fonda! Pretty silly, right? Thankfully, it never happened while they were married.

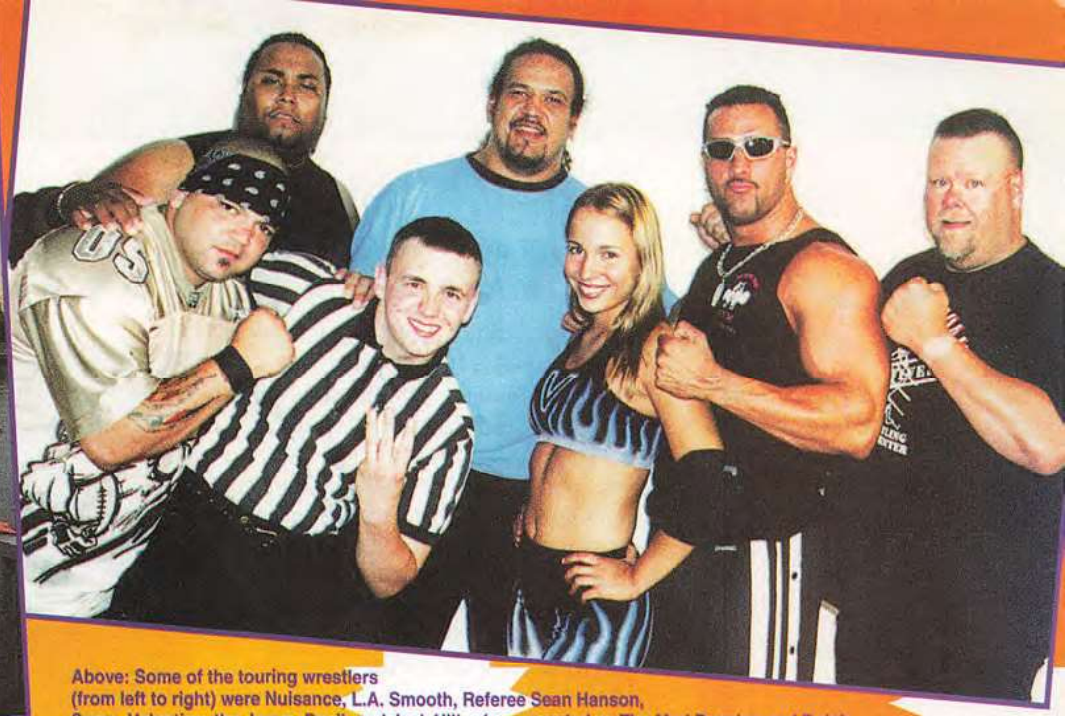
Why does wrestling always take this hillbilly approach (Sorry, Jethro!) to positioning, marketing, and overall salesmanship? Are they so ashamed of being involved in this business that they have to belittle it before some critic comes along and does it for them? I've talked to a number of top executives over the years in the homogeneous fields of automobile and food manufacturing, and the CEOs can rattle off revenues, projections, the whole schmear! In fields such as rassling, comic books, and so forth, they seem to distance themselves from the day-to-day operations and actually appear to take pride in not knowing where the businesses are headed, having no knowledge of the history, dynamics, and economic cycles of their niche categories which actually defy standard marketing principles. Any Economics or Business Administration grad who thinks that text-book techniques work in this type of environment…surprise! They don't.

Is pro wrestling now positioned as a "show about wrestling" as opposed to being a pseudo sport? If it's really about the storyline rather than athletic competition, this one-dimensional saga will soon grow stale, or has it already? Even *The Beverly Hillbillies* would be hard-pressed to sustain an interested audience if the producers continued to crank out new shows over the past 40 years. This applies to *The Sopranos* as well. Maybe *The McManos* and *WWE Wrestling* will continue to thrill millions of fans for generations to come…as ancient reruns on The Nostalgia Channel. In that distant future, let's just hope they're not scheduled against real retro heavyweights like *The Honeymooners* or *The Twilight Zone*, which were well-written programs leaving viewers hungry for more rather than the tradition of shoving more of the poorly executed "same thing" at couch potatoes over and over again.

Until next time, keep those positive waves.

MICHAEL O'HARA

Billy Anderson visited a Mosque in Adana, Turkey. photo: Bill Anderson



Above: Some of the touring wrestlers (from left to right) were Nuisance, L.A. Smooth, Referee Sean Hanson, Samu, Valentina, the Jersey Devil, and Jack Hill, who competed as The Mad Russian and Doink.

WRESTLERS invade AFGHANISTAN!

Text by Eric Shaffer

A HEARTY BAND OF PROFESSIONAL GRAPPLERS FROM THE WXW WRESTLING league recently completed a 22-day tour overseas with Armed Forces Entertainment in an effort to support the U.S. troops in war-torn Afghanistan and neighboring countries, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, Sinai, Turkey, and Uzbekistan.

The tour was life-changing for many of the mat stars and upon their return to the States, they graciously shared their experiences with ***New Wave Wrestling***.

The ring competitors flew from Turkey and Uzbekistan to Afghanistan on a C-17 cargo jet, fully loaded. Throughout the entire tour they lived on military bases, sometimes sleeping on cots in tents. During one memorable period, they recalled eating military rations during a two-day downpour of nonstop rain.

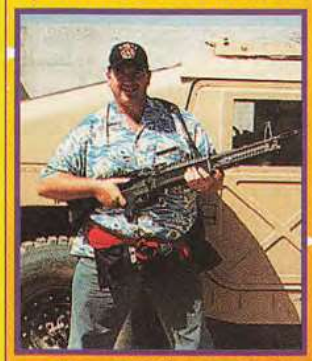
The wrestling events were warmly received as 400-500 soldiers from the Army, Navy, Marines, and the Coast Guard attended each slam-filled show.

The mat gladiators enjoyed sampling the local cuisine, citing Turkish chicken as one of their favorites, and there was no shortage of military MREs (Meals Ready to Eat).

Away from the ring, the slammers squeezed in some sightseeing, including a tour of the Great Pyramids and the Sphinx as well as trips along the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean Sea. Some wrestlers even took the biggest challenge of all—camel rides!

A big salute to the WXW wrestlers for tag teaming with the troops and for bringing a little bit of home to foreign soil, and a special thanks to all the men and women of the Armed Forces for their continuous efforts—working, protecting, and sacrificing—for the greatest and highest good. Come home safely soon.

Below: "Big Bill" Anderson fired off a few rounds in Uzbekistan at K² Camp. photo: Bill Anderson Collection



Above right: Note the phantasmogoric light surrounding Valentina, Sean Hanson, Malia Hosaka, and Nuisance while exploring an Egyptian Tomb! photo: Sean Hanson Collection

"Patriot" Gene Snisky, Sean Hanson & the New Jersey Devil outside the pyramids of Egypt. photo: Hanson Collection

Sean Hanson with Cmdr. Voorhies & the Black Hawk pilots in K² Uzbekistan. photo: Hanson Collection

FAT CITY WRESTLING

WWE STORYLINES, SCOOPS & SLAMMIN' SHTICK!

compiled by www.newwavewrestling.net

WWE: Former WWF World heavyweight wrestling champion Bret "The Hitman" Hart continues to make slow but steady progress as he recovers from a devastating June 24 bicycle accident in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The mat great was thrown from his bike after hitting a pothole at high speed. Not wearing a protective riding helmet, he was tossed over the handlebars and landed on his neck, head, and back, resulting in serious damage.

Tests taken at the local hospital revealed that Bret had suffered a mild stroke. No brain damage was incurred. He did, however, lose partial control over the left side of his body, but he is expected to make a full recovery within the next few months. Our thoughts and prayers are with "The Best There Is" as he rises up to conquer this latest challenge.

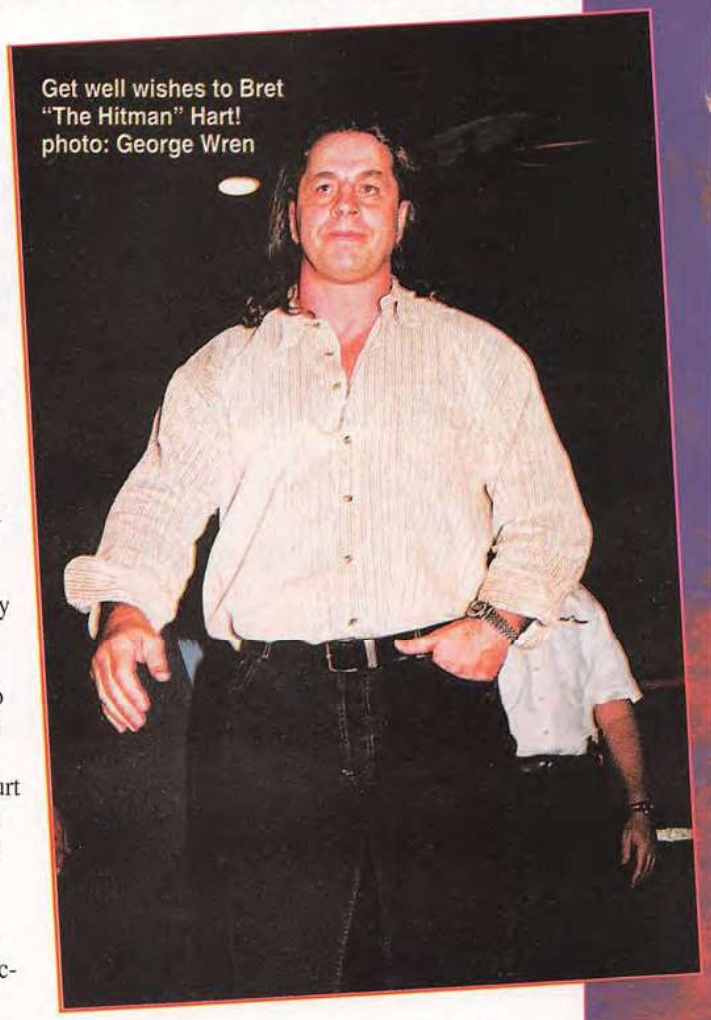
Triple-H's elbow surgery went exceptionally well and he should be back to a full WWE schedule by the time you read this.

Jazz (Carlene Moore) should be returning to active duty within the next three months after successful knee surgery.

Contrary to popular belief, "Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig was suspended for three months—not fired—after some sophomoric high jinks on a transcontinental flight during a recent WWE European tour.

Vince McMahon interfered and helped the Undertaker (Mark Callaway) gain a pinfall victory over Hulk Hogan (Terry Bollea) on a Madison Square Garden show this past June. Can a Hogan-versus-McMahon grudge feud be far behind?

Newcomer Jamie Noble previously worked as Jamie-San, a member of WCW's Jung Dragons. Veterans Dave "Fit" Finlay and Johnny Ace are working as WWE road agents.



Get well wishes to Bret "The Hitman" Hart! photo: George Wren

"Coach" Jonathan Coachman and The Rock (Dwayne Johnson) probably hit an all-new low on the July 29, 2002 edition of *WWE RAW*, when "Coach" admitted to using a microphone on part of a cow's anatomy. I think I'm beginning to understand the criteria used as part of the WWE's hiring practices.

It was VERY interesting and incredibly Freudian of ol' "Jelly Roll" J.R. when he proclaimed how refreshing it was to see a quality match end the aforementioned *RAW* program for a change. The Rock pinned "Nature Boy" Ric Flair (Richard Fliehr). Flair has become something of an Ayn Rand character over the years, and management (in either league) can't fathom what is Ric's appeal. It's called class, fellas. Look it up in your dictionaries!

The rumor mill continues to churn regarding "Stone Cold" Steve Austin's abrupt departure from WWE-land. Could it be that the storylines dictated a series of upcoming losses to "The

Another Rock flick looms. photo: Tokio Tsukada

Next Big Thing" Brock Lesnar?

Hulk Hogan recently stated that he returned to the WWE as part of his father's (Peter Bollea) dying request to see his son put things right with Vince McMahon. The blond brawler views this final (?) tour as a nostalgia act with his primary job being to make the younger talent look good.

Vince Russo quickly came and went from the WWE script scene. He has since procured scribe work with Jerry Jarrett's new NWA TNA pay-per-view wrestling league, while Eric Bischoff has arrived on the scene in hopes of turning the organization into the next AWA or WCW.

The best Bischoff proclamation recently spewed forth while being interviewed on the Rick & Brad Radio Show, where "Earache" Eric claimed that WCW never turned a profit until he arrived and that it became profitable within 14 months of his tenure. (I guess WCW's $80 million in losses which was reported in financial trade journals was a misprint.) He's the best. Eric. Vince. You guys were made for each other!

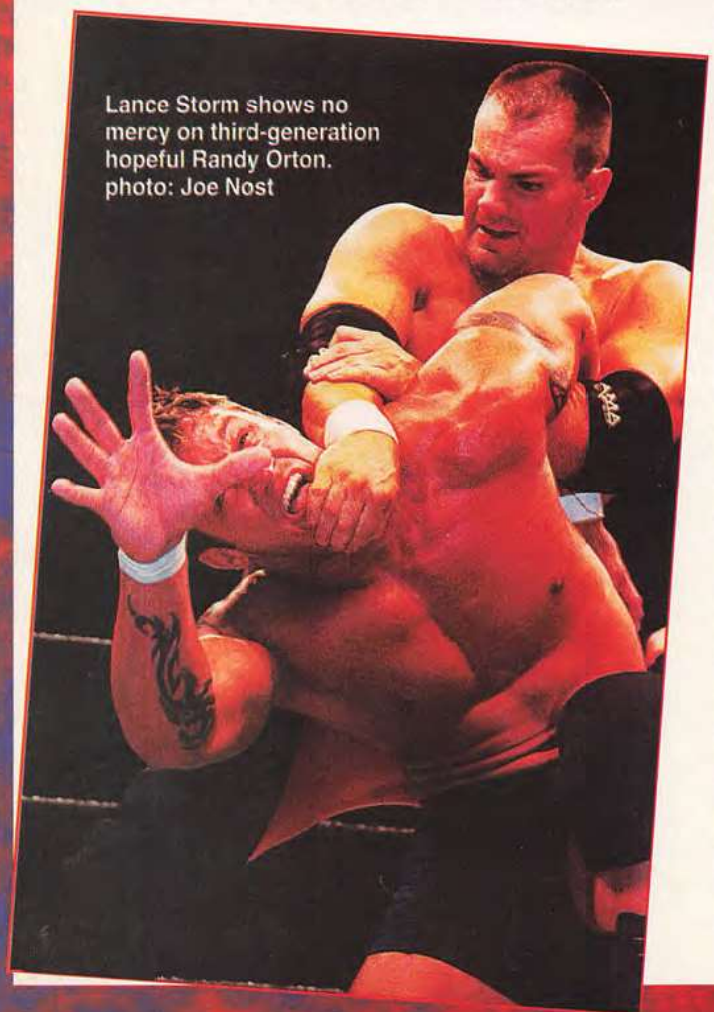
Kane (Glen Jacobs) is on tour of Australia at press time while still mending his torn bicep. Perry Saturn (Perry Satullo) should be back in action after shoulder surgery by the time you read this.

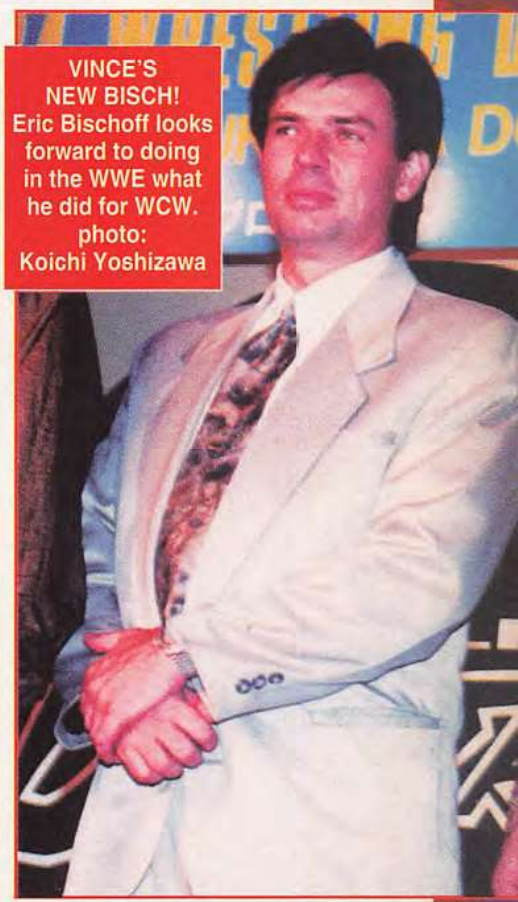
Get well wishes to Kevin Nash who is now recovering from surgery to repair a torn quadricep in his left leg. Another round of well wishing to Jesse "The Guv" Ventura who's battling a blood clot in his lung. This is the same physical mishap which ended his wrestling career in the mid-1980s and now returns to impede his political aspirations in the new millennium.

The Rock's new movie—Helldorado—is a comedy. Rey Misterio Jr. (Oscar Gutierrez Gonzales) has arrived on the circuit. The superheavyweight Samoan tag team, who flattened Moolah (Lillian Ellison) and Mae Young on WWE TV recently, are Eddie Phatu, the younger brother of Rikishi, and Matthew Anoai, the son of legendary "Wild Samoan" Sika Anoai. They have been perfecting their skills on the Heartland Wrestling Association circuit.

Speaking of Heartland Wrestling, the WWE is no longer using them as a territorial training ground. Only Ohio Valley Wrestling of Louisville, Kentucky, headed by Jim Cornette and Danny Davis (Dan Burile), will serve as a farm system. Ohio Valley recognizes Nova (Michael Bucci) as the OVW World heavyweight champion. Shelton Benjamin & Road Dogg (Rodney Begnaud) hold the Southern tag straps. **NWW**

Now let's see if we can get a pix of Torrie holding this photo of Billy holding her NWW pinup! photo: Eric Shaffer


Lance Storm shows no mercy on third-generation hopeful Randy Orton. photo: Joe Nost


VINCE'S NEW BISCH! Eric Bischoff looks forward to doing in the WWE what he did for WCW. photo: Koichi Yoshizawa

Is The "Stone Cold" Storyline A Scam?

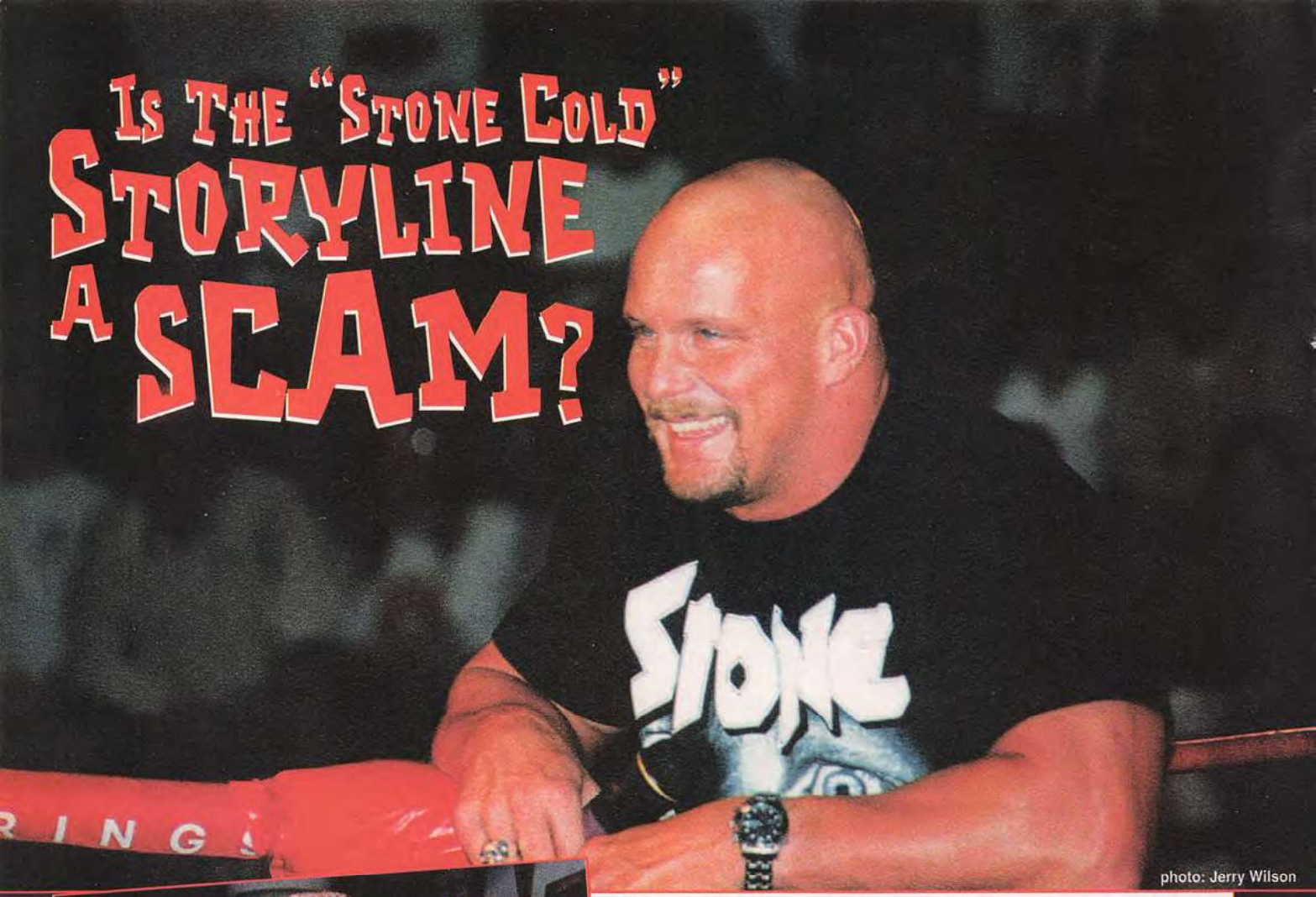


photo: Jerry Wilson

Has Vince flexed his muscle or simply attempted to inject new interest in a performer now in his seventh year under contract? photo: Scott Ferenczi

IF YOU'VE FOLLOWED THE GRAPPLING GAME FOR ANY length of time, you've learned to take everything that you see and hear with an ample amount of salt, so (with salt shaker in hand), we will now examine the abrupt departure of "Stone Cold" Steve Austin from the WWE talent roster.

Three months have now passed since the bombshell exploded before matdom. Now that some time has elapsed, we can take a closer look at the scenario and question its validity.

The first official announcement from the promotion occurred on the *WWE Confidential* program on June 15, 2002 in which Vince McMahon made it clear that the door was reservedly still open, but that "Stone Cold" Steve had been officially removed from the upcoming lineups.

McMahon followed this lengthy feature with a full-blown soliloquy on the June 17, 2002 edition of *WWE RAW* (emanating from Oakland, California). He discussed the situation, and he proclaimed Austin as a wrestler who had built the WWF/WWE. (Actually, Austin had SAVED the WWE. Guys like Bruno Sammartino, Pedro Morales, and Bob Backlund built the WWWF•WWF•WWE…and look where that got them!) McMahon ended his sermon with a beer salute to the banished brawler.

For those not familiar with the wherefores and whys of the situation, here it is in a nutshell. After *WrestleMania XVIII*, it is alleged that Austin complained of being burned out and needed an immediate leave of absence from touring. He was also rumored to be very unhappy with the creative-writing team's direction of his ring character.

The situation allegedly arose once more at the June 10, 2002

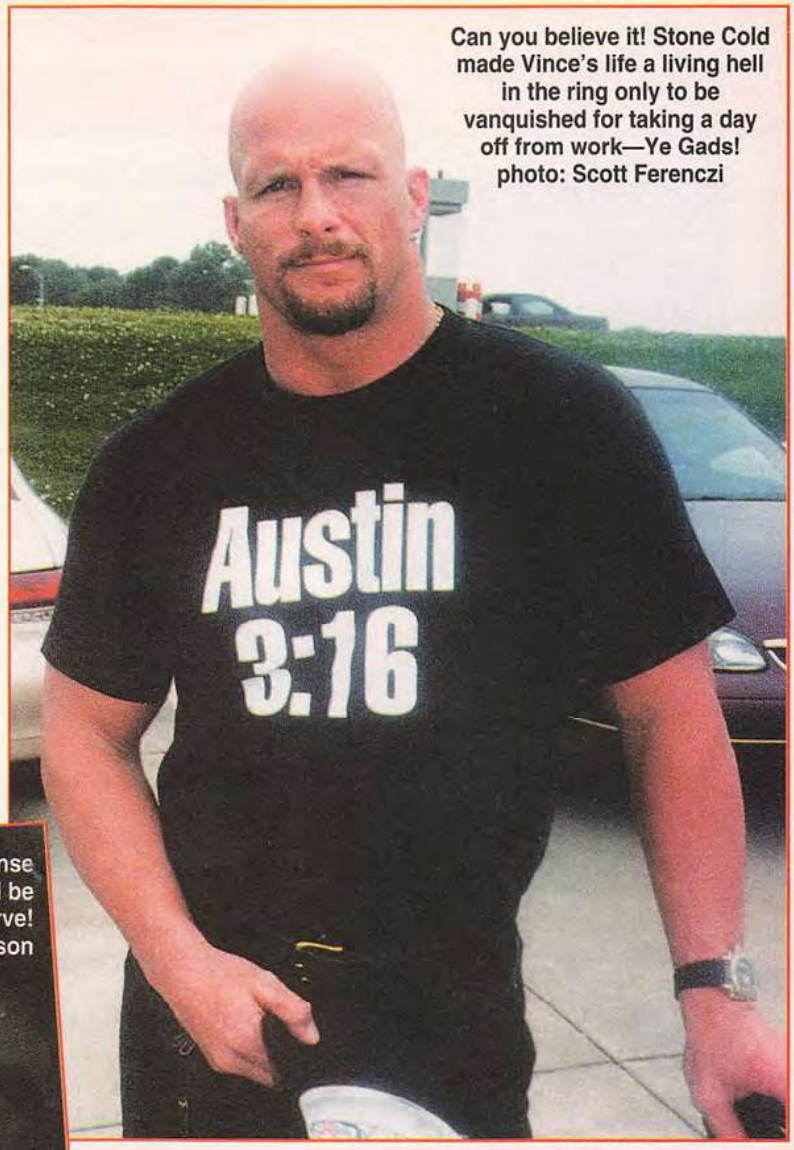
by Michael O'Hara

WWE RAW cablecast from Atlanta, Georgia. Austin supposedly arrived at the arena early, then soon left upon learning of his upcoming storyline.

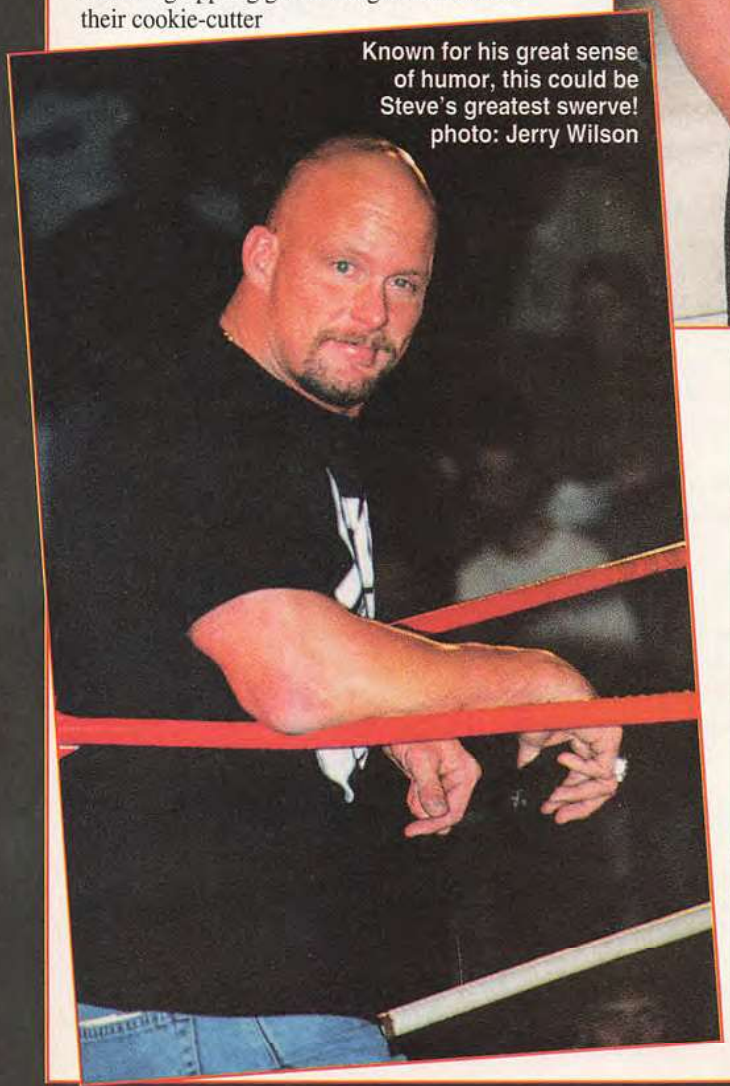
You can't help but wonder if this is a legitimate case of an employer and an employee being unable to settle their differences, with the obvious age-old result—"You can't fire me. I quit!"

Let's face it, ***New Waver***, wrestling is known to run in cycles. At this point in time, the down period of lower ratings and attendance figures is when the mat leagues look to cut their major overhead costs. Could Steve be in a similar situation to Bret Hart, who some years earlier proved to be too expensive for the league to retain as they looked to a new star? Ironically, that new star was Steve Austin.

The other side of the coin is equally interesting. TV ratings are down and the established stars can't seem to ignite the fire that existed in mat fans a few years earlier. Is it wise for the WWE to continue to exhaust one of its major legitimate draws during a period of obvious restructuring? Wouldn't it be wise to allow one of the (perhaps biggest) current stars on the roster a chance to rest, train, and allow old injuries to mend while creating at least a modicum of interest in some of the new grappling grads being churned out of their cookie-cutter factory? What's the point in having Austin steamroll over a bunch of rookies and turn them into feeding material as opposed to the possible saviors of the sport?



Can you believe it! Stone Cold made Vince's life a living hell in the ring only to be vanquished for taking a day off from work—Ye Gads! photo: Scott Ferenczi


Known for his great sense of humor, this could be Steve's greatest swerve! photo: Jerry Wilson

After seven years as the group's top draw, Austin needs a bona fide break from the constant assault on his physical well-being. His only respite has resulted from potentially career-threatening injuries. Doesn't he deserve time to live a life? Perhaps Steve has reached the point where he feels that if he doesn't stop to smell the roses now, he may never do it.

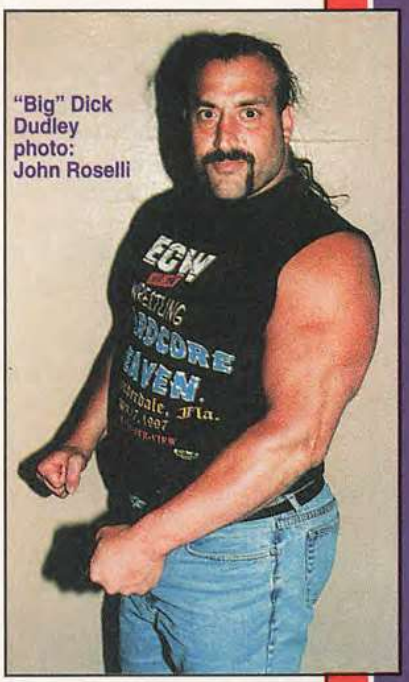
It would appear to be the opportune time for Steve to take a break from the grappling quagmire which is currently coagulating. (Yuck!) Austin could come back rested, invigorated, and revved up for his new challengers.

If Steve is truly gone, why is he still being mentioned in passing or used as part of a pseudo storyline? Normally, when a wrestler left the promotion in the past, he was, for all intents and purposes, erased from WWE history. (When was the last time you saw any major salutes to former World champs Bruno Sammartino or Bret Hart?) If wrestlers are banished to limbo, why was Austin the sole wrestler featured on a cover of one of the league's mags after his departure? Storyline? Scam? Grapple Fact? Only the passing weeks will tell. **NWW**

NWW REMEMBERS

compiled by George Wren

"British Bulldog"
David Smith
photo: Michael O'Hara


"Big" Dick
Dudley
photo:
John Roselli

"British Bulldog" Davey Boy Smith, 39, died of a heart attack on May 18 while on vacation in British Columbia. He began his career in England, and by the early 1980s teamed with British legend Big Daddy (Shirley Crabtree). He worked in Germany, South Africa, and Japan before he headed to Calgary, Canada to work for Stampede Wrestling. He was best known for teaming with "Dynamite Kid" Tom Billington as the British Bulldogs in the WWF. In the last few years he suffered from health problems, but continued to be a dominant force in WCW and the WWF.

"Big" Dick Dudley (Alex Rizzo), 34, was found dead from a heart attack in his Copiague, New York apartment on May 16. The indie wrestler is best remembered for his days as part of The Dudley Boyz clan in ECW.

Ben Alexander, 51, a pro wrestler and a fixture in the Mid-Atlantic and Mid-South Promotions, died on May 15 in Charlotte, North Carolina after suffering a series of mini strokes.

Scott Anderson
photo: Stegall Family
Collection

"Pee Wee" Anderson passed away on May 4. He was a highly respected WCW referee and contributed greatly to the excitement of many important title bouts.

Scott "The Enforcer" Anderson (Adam Stegall), 21, died on May 29 after an automobile accident. He began wrestling in May 2001 and worked various independent shows including the RWF, SCWA, and JWA. His last match was on May 25 when he captured the JWA Heavyweight title from J-Bone.

Shoichi Arai, 36, former Frontier Martial Arts Wrestling president, committed suicide on May 16 at Mizumoto Park in Katsushika, Tokyo. He had filed for bankruptcy on February 15, owing an estimated $2.5 million to creditors.

Abe Ford (Abraham Abrams), 89, longtime Boston promoter for the WWWF, died on May 12 of kidney failure.

George Gordienko, 72, pro wrestler from the 1940s to 1970s, died on May 13 of unknown causes. He began his career in London, England and wrestled all over the world, especially the Middle East in the 1960s. Gordienko's prowess was so internationally respected that he was once considered by promoters to be their choice to become the NWA World heavyweight champion, but he surprisingly turned his attention away from the ring and devoted his talents to artistic pursuits. He retired from professional wrestling in the mid-1970s to become a full-time and highly respected painter.

Erich Kulas, 22, died at his home on May 14 in Cranston, Rhode Island of unknown causes. He had sued New Jack and ECW after being cut in the forehead with an X-ACTO knife in a 1995 match. The suit was dismissed.

Bobby Managoff (Robert Manoogian), 85, recently passed away of natural causes. Bobby captured the World heavyweight championship on November 27, 1942 when he defeated Yvon Robert in Houston, Texas.

Stanley Weston, one of the pioneering publishers of pro-wrestling magazines in the late 1950s, passed away on April 11.

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MIKE'S MAILBAG

Send your comments & opinions to:
Michael O'Hara, Publisher
New Wave Wrestling
P.O. Box 9035, Grand Station, Dept. MM
Long Island City, NY 11103-0903

Dear Mike,

Wahoo McDaniel was a friend of mine. I was proud to be selected to speak of his accomplishments and to introduce him at his induction into the Cauliflower Alley Club's Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame. As it turned out, he was too ill to attend and lost his battle with kidney failure soon after the convention. He left me to ponder the praise that I might have heaped upon this one-of-a-kind individual.

Wahoo McDaniel was an all-American football player at the University of Oklahoma and he followed with an outstanding pro-football career. Then he entered pro wrestling and held every belt possible, except for the World championship, but the exceptional professional accomplishments represent only part of the man.

Wahoo was very proud to be a Native American. Early on in his career he wore a Native American headdress into the ring and performed a "war dance."

Later, as he realized and embraced the importance of his heritage, he refused that nonsense. Contrary to the stated opinions of most promoters, the change didn't affect his popularity. He continued to be popular with wrestling fans throughout the world—including me.

During my high-school years, Wahoo had played for the Chicago Bears. They were my team. I bought every preseason magazine I could find and was impressed by the descriptions I read about this "savage linebacker." I was also a pro-wrestling fan and I bought those magazines as well. When Wahoo became a wrestler, I was delighted and I followed his career every step of the way.

Fast forward to my entrance into the wrestling business in 1982. I continued to follow Wahoo's career as he joined the AWA in 1985 and became a wrestler and a "booker." All interview days during the TV tapings are long ones and on one such day he burst in yelling about something and he busted my break. Angry, I yelled for everyone to "shut up!" The wrestler I was interviewing said, "Don't do that. He has a terrible temper and he's the baddest cat in the alley." I really didn't like that.

As he was a main event wrestler and I was the announcer, we soon got to know one another. He constantly coached me, "Don't say he left the ring, say he slithered under the ropes. Don't say he's a brawler, say he's cowardly but dangerous." The things he taught me go on forever and weren't all about wrestling.

Wahoo lived by a code—no compromises, no regrets. "When I was in college we didn't lift weights. They thought it would make us musclebound." Can you imagine Wahoo in college on a weight program?

When his son was born, he said, "I gotta cut down on my drinking," and he did. I guess it was just too late. Drinking destroyed his kidneys and we lost him.

My favorite memory of Wahoo is something he told me shortly before the two of us left the AWA. He said, "They want me to turn heel. I can't do that to my fans."

Rest in peace, Wahoo.

Larry Nelson
Denver, Colorado

Mike's Memo: Larry Nelson was the superb play-by-play TV commentator for the AWA and is the author of *Stranglehold*, a book chronicling his adventures in the rassling biz.

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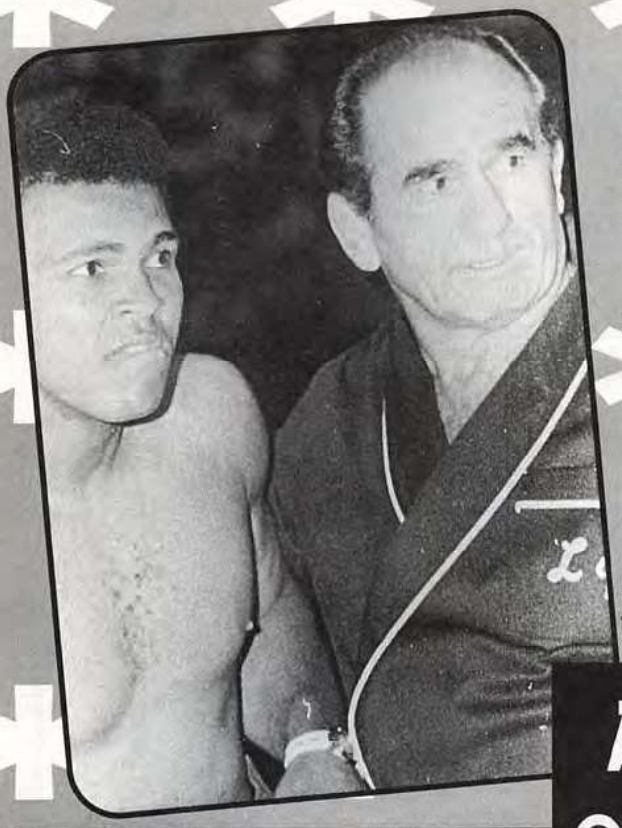


Left: Few have done more for their respective sports of boxing and wrestling than Muhammad Ali and Lou Thesz, two all-time greats in their chosen fields.

Right: Lou eliminated perennial ring rival Pat O'Connor in the finals of a 1987 WWF Old-Timers Battle Royal held in East Rutherford, New Jersey.
photo: Michael O'Hara

Special thanks to "Dapper" Dave Cameron for these rare Thesz pixs.

A Farewell to The Father of Modern-Day Wrestling

Always a master showman, Lou was never far from the bright lights of a wrestling ring or promotional campaign.

Six-time World heavyweight champion Lou Thesz passed away on June 3, 2002 at his Winter Garden, Florida home after recurring heart problems It was just two days after his 86th birthday. He'd been steadily improving since his open-heart surgery on April 9th.

He was born Aloysius Martin Lou Thesz on April 24, 1916 and was raised in St. Louis, Missouri. He was the son of a cobbler, Martin Thesz, who was once Hungary's middleweight amateur wrestling champion. Martin trained his son at an early age and went on to conquer the amateur mat world under the tutelage of George Tragos and Ad Santel. He turned pro at the age of 16. His first match took place in St. Louis and he became one of the city's favorite sons for the rest of his life. He was a constant presence at Midwest sportswriters luncheons and in the Cardinals clubhouse. Sportswriters agreed that he was the greatest pure wrestler of all time.

Thesz's skills and marketability skyrocketed when he aligned himself with the former World champion Ed "Strangler" Lewis. Lou soon became known as a top "hooker" (a term used to describe a competitor beyond being a "shooter," one who is capable of disabling a foe). "Hooks" are painful, potentially crippling moves dating back to legitimate wrestling's Pancration origins. Only a few pro wrestlers have possessed hooking skills, most notably Stu Hart, Bert Assirati, Billy Robinson, Boris Malenko, and Karl Gotch.

At 21 years of age, Lou was the youngest man to ever win the World heavyweight title when he defeated Everett Marshall in 1937. This began his incredible ascent to the top rung of pro wrestling. His sixth and final reign began in 1963 when he defeated "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers and it ended in 1966 at the hands of Gene Kiniski.

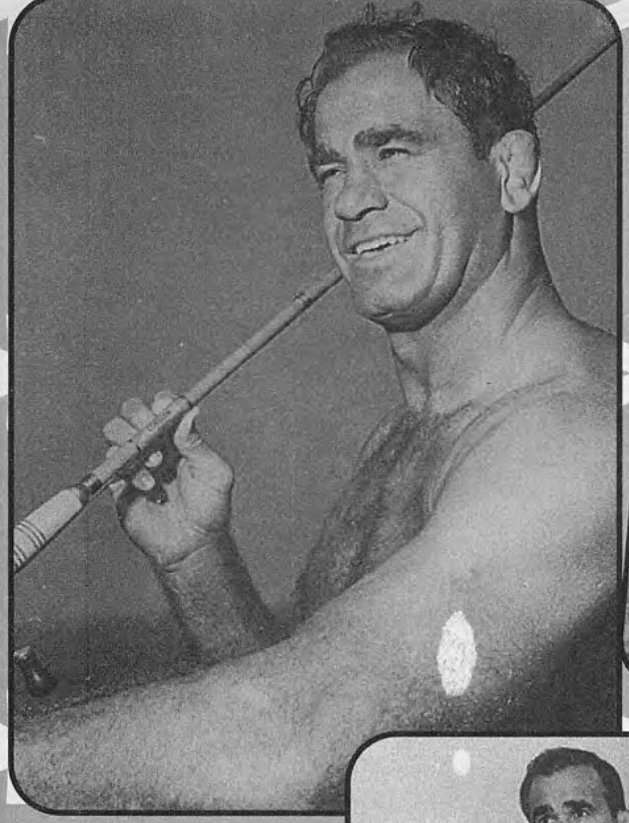
Throughout his entire wrestling career he carried himself with class and distinction, always wearing a suit at public events and conducting himself as a total professional. He was admired and respected by the Hollywood stars of his era and it was not uncommon to see him in the company of Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, and Ronald Reagan.

"He had it all. He was the greatest in wrestling. He could do so many things in the ring. He was always in perfect condition and that was during the era where you wrestled every night in matches which could last for an hour or more. He could move an opponent around, throw them in any direction with his famed wrist locks. Lou was always in control," stated eight-time NWA World heavyweight champion Harley Race.

Lou Thesz held the World heavyweight championship on six separate occasions and competed in 6,022 matches during his career. From 1937 until the completion of his final title reign in 1966, he literally dominated the sport.

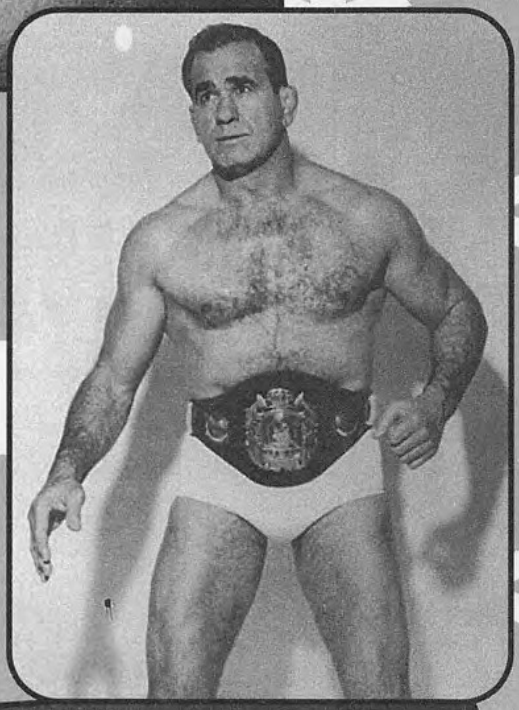
Although he professionally competed in every decade prior to his death, he went on to become an even bigger international influence as a promoter. He was a major contributor to the revitalization of the Mexican lucha libre scene in 1968 (feuding with El Canek), and helped Antonio Inoki launch his New Japan promotion in 1973. He also worked as a consultant for various Japanese wrestling leagues and athletes for the past thirty years.

A special thanks to Dentist Michael Lano for this tribute. Mike assisted Lou Thesz during his eight years as Cauliflower Alley Club president, and he has covered wrestling and boxing internationally since 1966. Mike can be reached at Wrealano@aol.com .



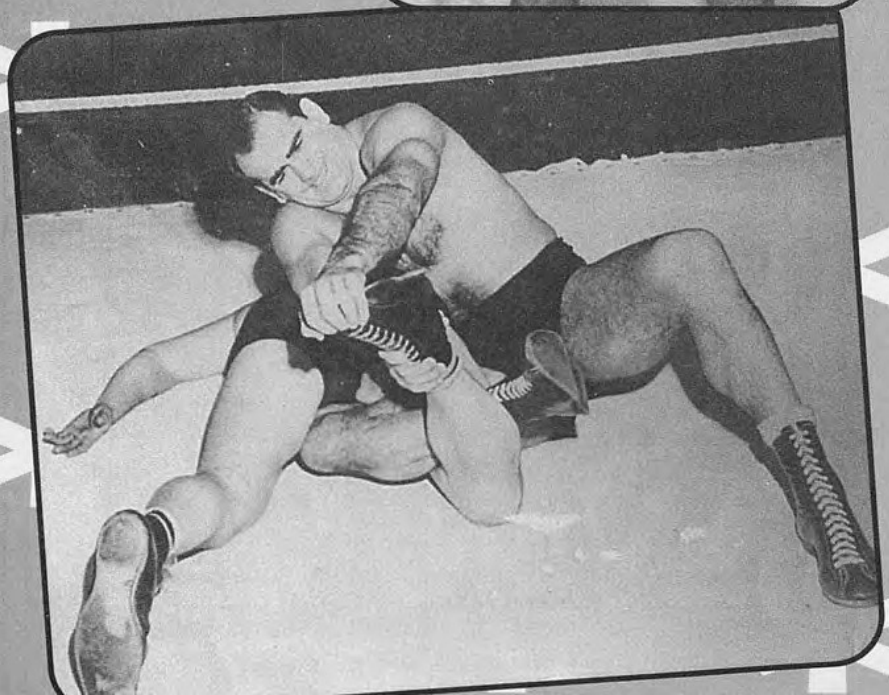
Above: Catching a wave before a big match later in the evening (circa 1950).

Above: Always the rugged outdoorsman, Lou was a fan of anything that tested his mettle. When not dominating the "big fish" of the ring, he could be found casting his line for even bigger watery challenges in the seven seas.



Right: A very familiar sight to wrestling fans of the 1930s through 1960s—Lou proudly wore and defended the NWA World heavyweight title gold against the very best of his generation

Below: Even during a practice drill, it was obvious that this was a no-nonsense figure four being applied!



Below: Lou contributed his time, money, and energy to many worthwhile causes. He's seen here with a youngster during a 1950s March of Dimes campaign.

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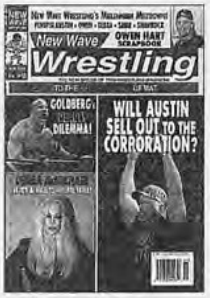

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Oh, yes, brothers and sisters, it is time, once again, to bestow one of the most respected and sought-after accolades in all of grappledom—you guessed it—**The Turco Award**™! This tribute is figuratively presented each issue to the wrestling personality who best embodies the class, elegance, and spirit of our respected sport.

Our Turco™ Committee has contemplated, arbitrated, vacillated, and masticated over who will be this issue's recipient. Originally, we intended to give the award to Tommy Dreamer, who proved that swallowing all sorts of unique inedible objects is the way to make it in big-time rassling. He quickly fell out of contention upon word that Vince Russo was rumored to have already surpassed his consumption intake. He, too, proved unworthy of this titanic Turco™ testimonial, so it is with great pride and reverence that we present this issue's award to **ERIC BISCHOFF**!

Welcome back to where you truly belong, Eric. After spearheading so many creative television projects, you grace the mat world once again with your presence. No doubt your closets are now jam-packed with Emmys and Oscars—any room left for the most prestigious of all...The Turco™?

We anxiously await with unbridled anticipation your input to the WWE juggernaut. We are so very confident in your skills and fully support your upcoming WWE projects wholeheartedly. Your sound business practices and unsurpassed, unparalleled ability to navigate the direction of a wrestling promotion will be put to good use, resulting in the WWE obtaining the end results they so richly deserve. Bravo, Eric, Bravo! The upcoming storylines will undoubtedly make your achievements in the AWA and WCW pale in comparison. This Turco's for **YOU**!

This is NO joke, New Waver!

This Coupon is Worth $2.00 Towards Any New Wave Wrestling Purchase of $10.00 or more!

You can deduct **$2.00** from your next *New Wave Wrestling* order of $10.00 or more. *NWW* items are offered on pages 39-46. Cut out this coupon and include it with your next purchase. You must use this original coupon (**NOT a photocopy**). It cannot be combined with any other coupon.

This Coupon Expires on DECEMBER 30, 2002.

Void where prohibited by law.

Wrestling to the Curfew

Now that the WWE has cornered the market on geezers, has-beens, and rethreads, it's time to rename their peerless ppvs to better reflect the timeless talents waltzing through the squared circle.

Here are a few of our own humble suggestions...

1 - *Retribution* will be renamed ***Regurgitation*** by its new sponsor Pepto-Bismol.
2 - ***SummerSplash*** (sponsored by Depends).
3 - ***Kink of the Ring*** will feature Jerry Lawler, Gene Okerlund, and all your favorite aging WWE lechers.
4 - Once these geriatric gladiators trip or are taken to the mat, it's time for the next exciting ppv—***No Way Up!***
5 - ***No Mercy***—sponsored by your local HMO doctor (I know, it seems a bit redundant, doesn't it?)
6 - ***Survivor Benefits Series***—trophies and meager checks will be presented to the next of kin of the elderly grapplers who participated at the event.
7 - ***Ginko Biloba's Unforgotten***—an exciting new two-hour ppv in which the top WWE stars try to remember where they left their car keys, their locker combination, and how to find their way to the ring.
8 - ***I've Fall Brawled and I Can't Get Up!***
9 - ***Battle Bowl*** will be a WWE event in which the exciting new additions to the roster suffering from bowel problems compete in order to gain access to the only working toilet at the arena.
10 - The AARP Presents ***WrestleMedicare!***

FANZINE FOLLIES!

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Long Island City, NY 11103

Dave Cameron, 34C Salisbury Road, Birkdale, Aucklund 10, New Zealand—huge wrestling photo list—$5.00 (U.S. cash only)...**Vince DiPalma's Sports Merchandise Exchange Newsletter**, P.O. Box 490, Farmingdale, NY 11735-–$5.00–Vince does a very professional job of providing superb wrestling news & views on a very informative 60-minute audiocassette...**Manuel González's Inside Puerto Rican Wrestling Newsletter**, HC 01 Box 3069, Utuado, Puerto Rico 00641-9601—$2.50—the latest Puerto Rican news (in English)...**Allan Greenberg's Between The Ropes eZine**, email btrrulz@hotmail.com for info—wonderful worldwide news & terrific insights...**Dr. Michael Lano's WrestleTalk Radio** is nationally syndicated to all sports radio stations by Cable Radio Network on Fridays 9-11 pm PDT. Do not miss this exceptional wrestling program!...**Mike Rodgers' Ring Around The Northwest**, 2740 SE Lewellyn, Troutdale, OR 97060—$1.00—the absolute best Pacific Northwest coverage...**Eric Shaffer's Son of Flip**, 60 W. Winona Avenue, Apt. #E-11, Norwood, PA 19074—$1.00—Eric's monthly provides everything that you're looking for in a topnotch zine—easily one of the best for WWE & regional coverage.

• Hey, Fanzine Editors! Please don't forget to return the favor by mentioning *New Wave Wrestling* in your fine publications!

INTERNATIONAL SLAMS

Rico Casanova bounces back from a near-fatal injury!

AFRICA

IWCN: The International Wrestling Club of Nigeria recognizes Katanka as their heavyweight champion. "Monkey Man" Prime Tornado is the light-heavyweight champion. Terror Kid is the middleweight titleholder. M.C. Original is the welterweight kingpin.

NWF: Mr. Kicx is the superheavyweight champion. Super Black Power holds the heavyweight crown. The tag-team titles are vacant. "Big" Ben Everest Jr. is the cruiserweight titleholder. The light-heavyweight champ is Proving Mohammed. Ariba Swan continues as the middleweight champ. Austin Tiger still has a firm grip on the welterweight gold. Anna Ring Marshal is the Women's champion.

UWF: The South African wrestling scene has been slow as of late with no major changes to report. The Polish Warrior holds the All-European heavyweight crown. Akam & Gama Singh remain two of the most popular stars on the circuit. Akam Singh is also the mid-heavyweight champion.

Others who have recently toured have included the following: Steven "Tornado II" Debbes, Danie Voges, Danie Brits, the Phantom, Jypsey Roulett, Jacque Rouge, the Punk, Leon the Hillbilly, Jeronimo the Indian King, the Giant Prisoner, and Sunny Surf.

AUSTRALIA

ACW: Youngblood (Daniel Harpas) is the Australian Championship Wrestling titleholder. Blade & Live Wire are the tag-team champs. Cobra Tai has the Hardcore crown. Big Bad Nick (Nicholas Petrou) is the European titleholder.

AWF: TNT (Ian Riddington), the AWF Australasian champion, is feuding with The Ox.

Other AWF stars include: Dean Draven, Kid Kross, the Handsome Brothers, Greg Stekka, Il Cognito, P.C. Virus, and "Mad" Tony Kebab.

IWA: Leif Jeffries is the Trans-Tasman heavyweight champion. Cheap Heat (Rodney Schwanker & Andrew Bumthorne) have the tag-team straps. Chief Kala Levai is the heavyweight kingpin.

WWAS: World Wrestling All Stars titleholder "Big Poppa Pump" Scott Steiner will be teaming with Midajha against former WWAS champion Nathan Jones and Queen Bee on the upcoming tours to take place this October in Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne.

Tentatively scheduled stars include: A.J. Styles, Jerry Lynn, the Funkster (Alan "Kwee Wee" Funk doing a Hulk Hogan parody), Quebecer Pierre, Sabu, Crowbar (Chris Ford), Ernest "The Cat" Miller, Brian Christopher, Buff Bagwell, Steve Ray, and Chuck Chaos.

BELGIUM

A recent tour featured World heavyweight champion Prince Zéfi, French heavyweight titleholder Mickey Trash, and the European tag champs—Flesh Gordon and Greg Lover.

CANADA

NCW: Chakal defeated Franky the Mobster to regain the Quebec heavyweight championship. Black Eagle has been successfully defending his Inter-City crown against Gorgeous Mike. Flatface Jeremy defeated Diablero for the TV title. Ground Zero upset Nightmare and Nightstalker for the tag-team gold.

COSTA RICA

LP: Current stars on the Luchamania circuit include: Duende Muerte, Bucanero, Fantomas, Black Power, Lásser, Aguila Kid, Araña Negra, and

Araña Guerrera. A current listing of champions was unavailable at press time.

ENGLAND

NWA-UK: Hammerlock promotions, working with the American-based National Wrestling Alliance, recognizes Majik as the U.K. junior-heavyweight champion. "Vigilante" Johnny Moss and Gary Steele are feuding over the NWA United Kingdom heavyweight belt.

FRANCE

IWSF: The International Wrestling Stars Federation recognizes Prince Zéfi as their heavyweight champion. Mickey Trash is the current French heavyweight champion titleholder. Flesh Gordon and Greg Lover hold the European tag-team belts.

A European tournament has been announced for May 2003 in Nevers, France with an expected attendance of 6,000+ fans.

IRELAND

IWW: Irish Whip Wrestling, based in Tallaght, Dublin, Ireland, works in conjunction with the American-based Combat Zone Wrestling. Chris the Bambi Killer and Michael Kovac are feuding over the European Wrestling Association heavyweight title.

IWW is hopeful of bringing many CZW stars to the Emerald Isle including: Zandig, Justin Pain, Adam Flash, "Hardcore" Nick Gage, and Nate Hatred.

Tadao Yasuda powerbombed Yuji Nagata during an exciting New-Japan battle. photo: Koichi Yoshizawa

JAPAN

All Japan: All-Japan Pro Wrestling recently celebrated its 30th anniversary in grand style with a big show in Tokyo. Tenryu and Taiyo Carr are battling over the Triple Crown championship. Great Muta, Mil Mascaras, and Dos Caras teamed up against Abdullah the Butcher, Gran Hamada, and Gran Naniwa.

MOROCCO

Stars from the French-based ISWF recently toured. They include: World heavyweight champion Prince Zéfi, French heavyweight titleholder Mickey Trash, the European tag champions Flesh Gordon & Greg Lover, Bernard Vandamme, Tarraz, Scott Rider, and Marc Mercier.

PUERTO RICO

IWA: Ricky Banderas holds the IWA heavyweight title. Los Boricuas have the tag-team straps. The Hardcore champ is Huracan Castillo. Anarchy and Stefano are feuding over the IWA junior-heavy belt. Chicano is the Intercontinental heavyweight kingpin. Rico Suave continues to hold the Caribbean title.

In surprising news, top WWC star Ray González jumped leagues and will now be main eventing for the rival IWA!

WWC: Carly Colón has become the top star as a result of Ray González's jump to the rival IWA league. Wilfredo Alejandro is the Television titleholder. Eddie Colón and Damian Steele are battling over the junior-heavyweight crown.

Several wrestlers have "no showed" on recent events including: El Bronco, Super Gladiators I & II, and Thunder & Lightning.

Others who have recently worked under the WWC banner include: Hercules Ayala, Kid Romero, Brent Dail, Justin Sane, Mohammed Hussein, Ricky Santana, the Reggaetones, Yunque, Mr. Casanova, and ladies Sexie Marie and Tigresa.

Puerto Rico Notes: Rockin' Rico Casanova is back in action after sustaining chemical-warfare damage to his system during the Gulf War. Rico underwent a kidney transplant and spent several years battling to regain his health.

Rico is now competing on the independent circuits in the United States and looks forward to greater triumphs in the international rings of both the WWC and IWA promotions of Puerto Rico. Continued success, Rico, and the very best of luck to you. NWW

Abismo has arrived in Puerto Rico's IWA rings. photo: George Wren

Chris Jericho

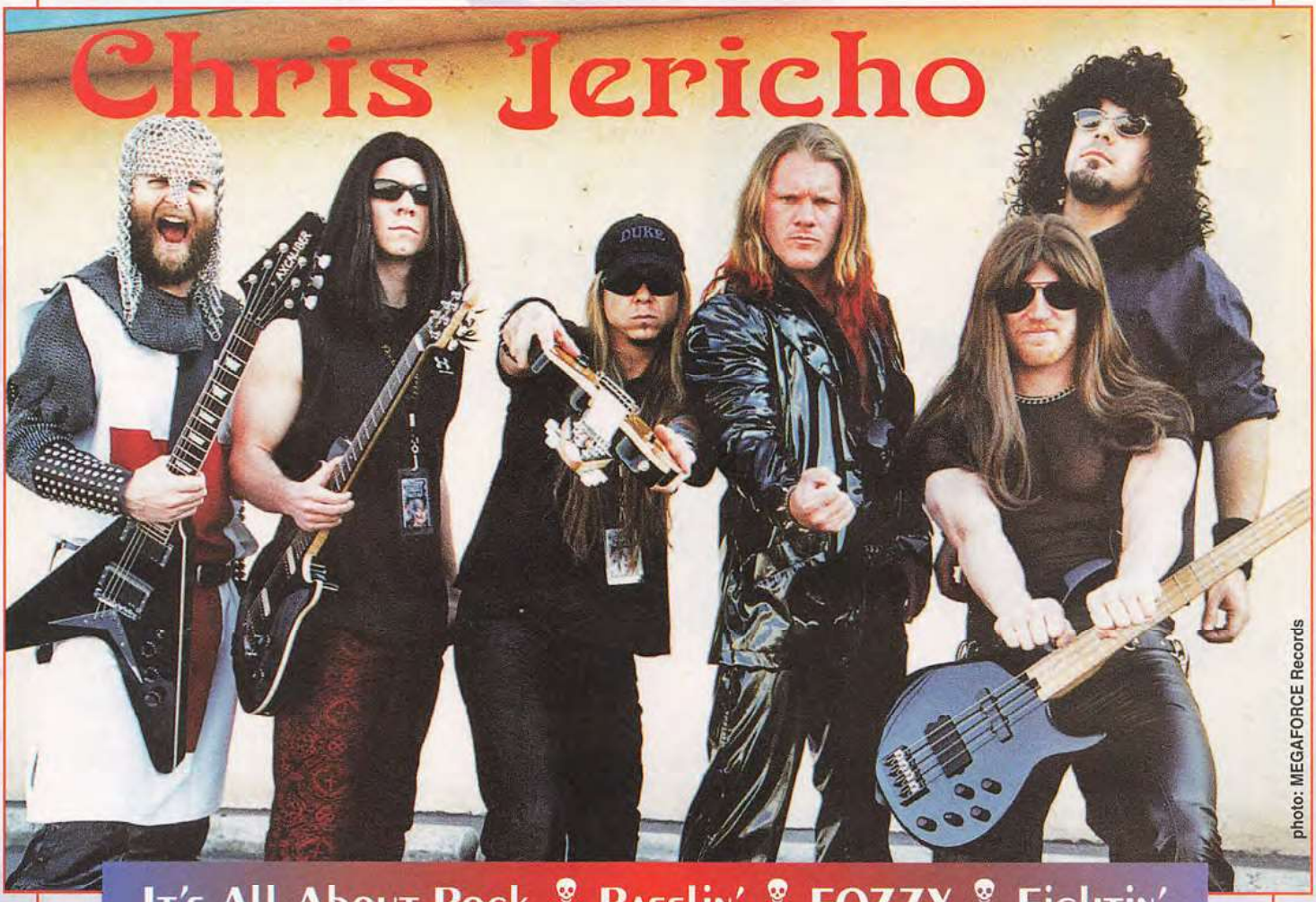


photo: MEGAFORCE Records

It's All About Rock ☠ Rasslin' ☠ FOZZY ☠ Fightin'

NW: I HAD NOT HEARD THE BAND BEFORE, BUT I WAS ALWAYS TOLD IT WAS AN OZZY OSBOURNE TRIBUTE BAND, WHICH I NOW FIND IT ISN'T. WHY FOZZY? HOW DID IT ALL COME TOGETHER?

CJ: It started about three years ago when I was finishing up with WCW. I was hurt and out for three months. I had a friend, Rich Ward, who played with the band Stuck Mojo. He's also a wrestling fan, so we put together a tribute band to cover some of the fun songs. We had done stuff like this before under the band name of Fozzy Osbourne and had fun. We came up with the storyline of the band being stranded in Japan. Then it started to snowball. It was getting more legitimate and serious. We dropped the Osbourne part and continued as FOZZY.

NW: You have your own unique sound, but I catch a few influences in the work—Motorhead, Iron Maiden, Van Halen. I think it's important to draw from creative sources and at the same time find your own voice to make the work your own. FOZZY has certainly done this. What's great about music is that you can go back to that source material and see (via video) or hear what was done and why.

With the wrestling business, it's the opposite. You have to draw totally from memory as there isn't an opportunity to study such wrestlers as Jimmy Snuka, Antonino Rocca, and Pat Patterson. Even though you stand on their shoulders, today's stars have no point of reference before 1990. How does this affect the quality of today's matches and the evolution of the sport in the future?

CJ: I don't necessarily agree with you on this point. Everybody has their influences. If you're in a band today, you've obviously been influenced by Elvis or the Platters, but you're probably going to have more modern influences in your work. FOZZY has a lot of influences.

It's the same in wrestling. I was influenced by Shawn Michaels, Dynamite Kid, and guys like that. I wouldn't be influenced by Antonino Rocca or Lou Thesz because they're not from my time period. It's a different time. You can appreciate all they accomplished, but it's not the same game anymore.

It's the same with music. You can appreciate what they've accomplished—the attitudes and the rebellious stuff that they've done—but it's a new world now.

NW: Okay, so it keeps moving from your starting point of reference. You were influenced by the Dynamite Kid, who was drawing from a 1970s influence. You believe the lineage is there as everyone works from their time period. The 90s guys look back to the 80s. The 80s guys look back to the 70s, and so on.

Back to FOZZY—you've created Moongoose McQueen. The choice of alter egos for the band members and the group's origins are interesting. Is this an attempt to carve out an individual success path away from the "Chris Jericho"

interview by Michael O'Hara

Background Photo: Clay Patrick McBride

What is the sound of one man slapping? The Rock found out! photo: Joe Nost

character as opposed to hooking up to the the WWE caravan?

CJ: We started playing around with the band, giving it more depth than just being a cover band. FOZZY has gone far beyond that. The new CD has five original songs, so we're definitely moving into more original territory. We wanted to do a backstory to have more fun and be a little more creative, because I'm a creative guy and that's what I do. So our characters have somewhat of a Blues Brothers concept. Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi played characters, wore costumes, and sang obscure music to keep it alive. Meanwhile, they had a great R&B band backing them.

It's the same with FOZZY. Moongoose McQueen is my version of Jake and Elwood. My band is the new-age version of the Blues Brothers. Moongoose is an alter ego. Originally, it was a totally separate thing. If I were Moongoose now, I wouldn't be talking about Chris Jericho and vice versa, but it's definitely lightened up a bit over time. It's a Mick Foley/Cactus Jack situation. I have an alter ego because it is a different thing. It's not Chris Jericho singing songs. It's Chris Irvine wrestling as Chris Jericho. It's Chris Irvine singing as Moongoose McQueen. They are different characters in separate genres with separate styles.

NW: Wrestling is already a parody—the theatrics and egos, but you can really parody what goes on in the music business—heavy metal's temperamental attitudes. The FOZZY documentary really hit all points. It was very funny and made some very astute comments about life on the road and the music business.

CJ: It was cool. I enjoyed doing it. The whole Fozzy storyline has been a great deal of fun for all of us, because we can take the characters in any direction we want.

NW: You just completed three years in the WWE—congratulations. Over that period, I found the script writers have been having a hard time separating the "blond long hairs" from one another. I've been pretty vocal about the cookie-cutter position you've been put in as a WWE competitor. In *New Wave Wrestling #43*, I wrote a story titled "Why Can't Jericho Win the Big One?" which explained my view.

Is there some need to have all the blond long hairs conform to a certain mold? Test, Edge, Triple-H, and even Jericho seem to be the same plastic action figure once removed from their cosmic "blister cards" in the eyes of the WWE wordsmiths. I think you're a total original. What's your view on this? Have you had any conflict in the positioning of the WWE version of the Chris Jericho character?

CJ: I have to disagree with you on this point. Just because some of the guys have long blond hair, there is absolutely no similarity between my character and Test, or Triple-H, for that matter. Chris Jericho is an original. I don't think that I'm doing anything similar to what those guys are doing. I'm definitely a more flamboyant, charismatic guy, and to make a point about my time in WCW, while it was a lot of fun, it was a different time in my career. It's always about moving on—transforming. It was an interesting time, but it was also a time when I basically didn't have much to do, or wasn't given much to do, and it was a real effort to just keep my head above water, but I had fun creating what I could to make the character interesting.

But now, this is three years down the line, things are a bit more serious. I think I am one of the few true heels in the company. I don't want anybody to cheer me. I do what I can to make sure that it doesn't happen. The more flamboyant and funny you are, the more you are going to be cheered, that's why you're going to be turned into a babyface, because of all that humor and charisma. Don't get me wrong, I think that's great, but I see a different direction for the character now. He's moved three years down the line since WCW. My job as a heel is to make people hate me. I want fans to boo me and cheer my opponent rather than people being torn one way or the other—half cheering and half booing me because I'm a cool heel.

NW: But I think that's going to happen anyway because there is a significant portion of the wrestling audience which is very antiestablishment and the Chris Jericho character speaks to that segment of the audience. Even years ago, heels had their following. That antiestablishment aspect of your ring personality will appeal to them. They are going to like that side of the character regardless.

CJ: Oh sure, but you try to minimize that. I try to do things outside of the box. I've always been very good at taking

photo: MEGAFORCE Records

"Lionheart" Chris dominated Japan's WAR light-heavyweight division in 1993. photo: Koichi Yoshizawa

something mediocre and turning it into something usable and good. Not that it always happens. The writers are only human and not everything they come up with is going to be great. My job is to take what's given—what's created by someone else—and make it my own.

NW: It's the same with music. You take your influences and create your own voice from that body of work—make it your own with your own voice.

But that's my earlier point about a sameness in the writing because wrestling is so corporate now and constricted to the point where the characters can't do anything improvisational. The wrestling script writers have a concept in their minds—how they want to write for you and how you're going to act. In your head, you may have something totally different. After all, how many guys are on the WWE roster? The writers have to create an individual voice for each wrestler. It would seem to me that you really have to fight to retain a position of individuality. Does it ever happen where you have to say, "Wait a minute, this would work better for Test or Triple-H, because it's not something my character would do!" Does that ever occur in your experience? Do the writers and the wrestlers always see each other's viewpoints or is it a struggle to keep the ring character authentic? Do you have to fight to get your voice or opinion across?

CJ: Not in the least, man. I have a very good relationship with the writers and an excellent working relationship with Vince. If something doesn't make sense, I express myself and it gets changed so that the situation is made better. We all want to be the best that we possibly can. It's a very easy atmosphere. Nothing is forced upon you. There are no heated discussions.

NW: In comparison, do you find such an obstacle in music? As opposed to being yourselves—is there a dynamic in place that wants FOZZY to be the next Black Sabbath or Mötley Crüe clone?

CJ: Well, it's just part of show business. There are always going to be people who will want what they want or have a certain view of what you should do. Of course, the only person who knows what's best for you is yourself. I know my character better than anyone else does.

FOZZY knows their fans better than anyone, too. You must work from this belief system and then hand your music over to the record company. They're either going to like it or they're going to want to make some changes.

It's the same in wrestling. They're either going to like your idea or they're going to want to make changes. Some changes you make, some you don't, and some you compromise so that everyone feels satisfied.

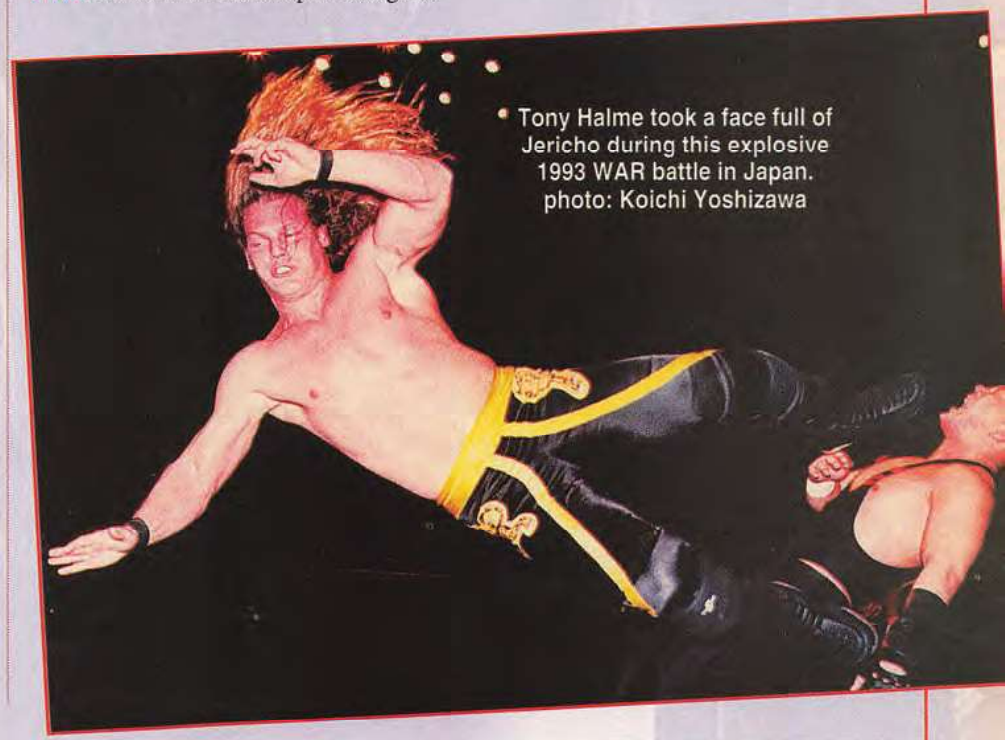
NW: Are both industries open enough to hear your view and allow compromise?

CJ: Well, there has to be. If there isn't, it's all one big corporate conglomeration. They can't afford to totally do that with creative people. You have to let them be creative. Wrestlers are artists. Musicians are artists. That's what we do—we create things. It's easy for people to tell you what to do, but the thing is, an artist does what he feels he should do, you know?

NW: That's right, it's coming from a unique source. Creativity can't be explained or concocted, it just is. The one end of business is administrative and the other end of business is creative. Sometimes both sides have a hard time seeing the other's point of view. Was that the sort of problem which had arisen in WCW?

CJ: WCW was really just a case of pure incompetence. They just didn't know their asses from a hole in the ground. It's a shame. Because of all the dumb things they did and the bad decisions they made, WCW is gone, and it's just not good for the business. It was all WCW's fault. There were guys who were trying to make it better. They were working their asses off, but management never saw it or thought that way.

NW: I always thought you rose above what was going on there. Many top stars came out week after week and bitched about how unfair the promotion treated them, but you never succumbed to that. You transcended the mundane as if to



Tony Halme took a face full of Jericho during this explosive 1993 WAR battle in Japan. photo: Koichi Yoshizawa

The Jerichoholic and Eddie Guerrero valiantly tried to break through WCW's impenetrable glass ceiling. photo: Craig Prendergast

say I'm here and I'm going to do my job. I'm going to do my best under whatever prevailing working conditions. Was there any feedback from the CEOs or your peers?

CJ: From my peers, of course, they gave me the thumbs up all the time. We were all trying to make it work, but from management—nothing! They couldn't see it. There were times when I was the most over heel they had or Eddie Guerrero was a huge heel, but management still wouldn't do anything to take advantage of that opportunity.

NW: They wouldn't deviate from the course they had planned out for the next month or six months.

CJ: They'd put Eddie Guerrero against Sting. You've gotta be kidding me! Jericho versus Goldberg—that's insane! That's not going to work. It was feeding some guys to make other guys look good without any thought to where it was going. My job was always to do the best I could in any situation. It wasn't about money. I wanted job satisfaction, to feel good about what I was doing and to enjoy myself in the process. I knew it was time for me to leave WCW.

NW: Well, you held your head high through that entire time frame in WCW, and you've been a wonderful contributing factor to the WWE. I think you've changed some of the direction there. McMahon has his vision of where he wants the business to go. His ups and downs have a tendency to level out eventually, but I think the timing was right for your WWE arrival.

CJ: I was always a WWF fan growing up. I really didn't know much about WCW. I've always wanted to be in the WWF, that was my goal.

NW: Is it very hard for the guys to say WWE after all of these years of saying WWF? I'm still screwing it up all the time. [*Laughs*]

CJ: It doesn't happen so much on TV, because you're very conscious of being on TV. It's when you're not on TV—if someone says, "Oh, you're a wrestler, where do you wrestle?" I'm ready to say I'm with the WWF, then I catch myself. It's still pretty weird.

I think the guy who has the worst problem with it is Vince McMahon. He created it and has to change the logo and the promotional materials. That's how it is.

NW: Promoters have been trying to push the Rock & Wrestling Connection for 20 years. What would it take to make it work? Do you think the wrestling and rock audiences are two different markets? One never seems to cross over fully to the other.

CJ: I disagree with you. I think the rock and wrestling fans are similar. There is a definite gray area in between. Heavy-metal music and wrestling have many similarities as far as hard-hitting forms of entertainment. Both are exciting, live, heavy on pyrotechnics and energy, and filled with adrenaline.

To make it work, I don't know if there ever was a wrestler who had a serious band before. Maybe FOZZY can parlay this into something as far as making the Rock & Wrestling Connection a little more legitimate. Many wrestlers have tried over the years, but it's all been more or less novelty recordings.

FOZZY is more of a legitimate, serious band. I'm probably the first accomplished rock performer headlining a serious heavy-metal band. There have been wrestlers with bar band credentials who have performed in the past, but in terms of putting together an album or a single that can stand on its own merit, that hasn't happened. It's all been novelty recordings.

FOZZY looks to be the breakthrough in this area. It's detrimental when people say, "What, a wrestler, he can't possibly sing. What is this a joke!" The critics say the Rock can't be an actor. That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. If you're a creative person, why not? Who says Chris Jericho can't wrestle as well as sing in a band and be accomplished in both realms. That's nonsense.

NW: Do you feel that you have to overcome all those novelty songs released by the wrestlers from prior years?

CJ: Yes, many wrestling fans will certainly check us out. That helps create a base in some sense, but a band couldn't survive on that alone. We have to take it to the general public and overcome the critics. FOZZY has to put its material out

Chris belts out a tune! photo: MEGAFORCE Records

there and be judged on its merits. We can't be helped or hurt by the connotations of a wrestler fronting a heavy-metal band. FOZZY is a legitimate rock & roll band, especially live on stage.

We recently performed at a festival in Germany with 20,000 people in attendance. Germany doesn't get a lot of WWE programming. Most people didn't know who FOZZY was, but we pretty much stole the show with our sound and presentation.

NW: That must have answered several questions for you. You found out that the work could stand on its own merit, and that your success was not derivative of being a wrestler and thereby garnering spill off from your ring following.

CJ: Well, if wrestling opens a door, great, I'll take it, but when we get on stage, the proof is in the production. Talent and ability will ultimately keep FOZZY touring. Long-term success will be gained based on performance alone.

NW: What came first—music, wrestling, or hockey?

CJ: Hockey came first, but wrestling was there as well. I was always watching it when I was younger, and music came in close behind. I would say I became interested in music at about eight years of age. Now they're all intertwining.

NW: Do you think it was the explosive, high energy of all three that was the appeal to you as a child?

CJ: Yep, I would agree with that. Once again, it was the personalities in wrestling—the energy and the charisma. The personalities in music are obvious as well. Even before heavy metal, the first band I really got into was The Beatles, so it was pretty much anything that had some character, heart, and soul.

NW: You were drawn to creativity.

CJ: Yes, exactly. I respect the creativity.

NW: Where do you see FOZZY in the coming years? Will you be headed more into the music field with greater fervor as the years and injuries mount?

CJ: Well, wrestling is still my "day job." Music is still a side project at this time.

NW: Have you watched *The Osbournes* on MTV? What do you think of the show? Are you surprised by Ozzy's real life? Do you think that letting the fans see Ozzy Osbourne's real life diminishes the fantasy of being a heavy-metal performer? Is there any connection to Chris Irvine's real life? Give the fans some idea of an average "day off."

CJ: I think it's great. My favorite thing about the show is how the public perception of Ozzy has changed over the last six months. I've been a big Ozzy fan since 1982 and he's been public-enemy number one for everybody up until six months ago. Now he's the darling of the public. Parents and grandparents love him. It just makes me laugh how easily the public's opinion can be swayed by a TV program. Twenty years of ill will has been wiped away in three months thanks to a TV show.

NW: It just shows that you must be true to who you are instead of second guessing what the public wants. Whatever field of endeavor you're in, you must follow your own beliefs. Ozzy has certainly proven that. He hasn't changed, but people—en masse—have changed their opinion of him. All he had to do was stay the course and be himself.

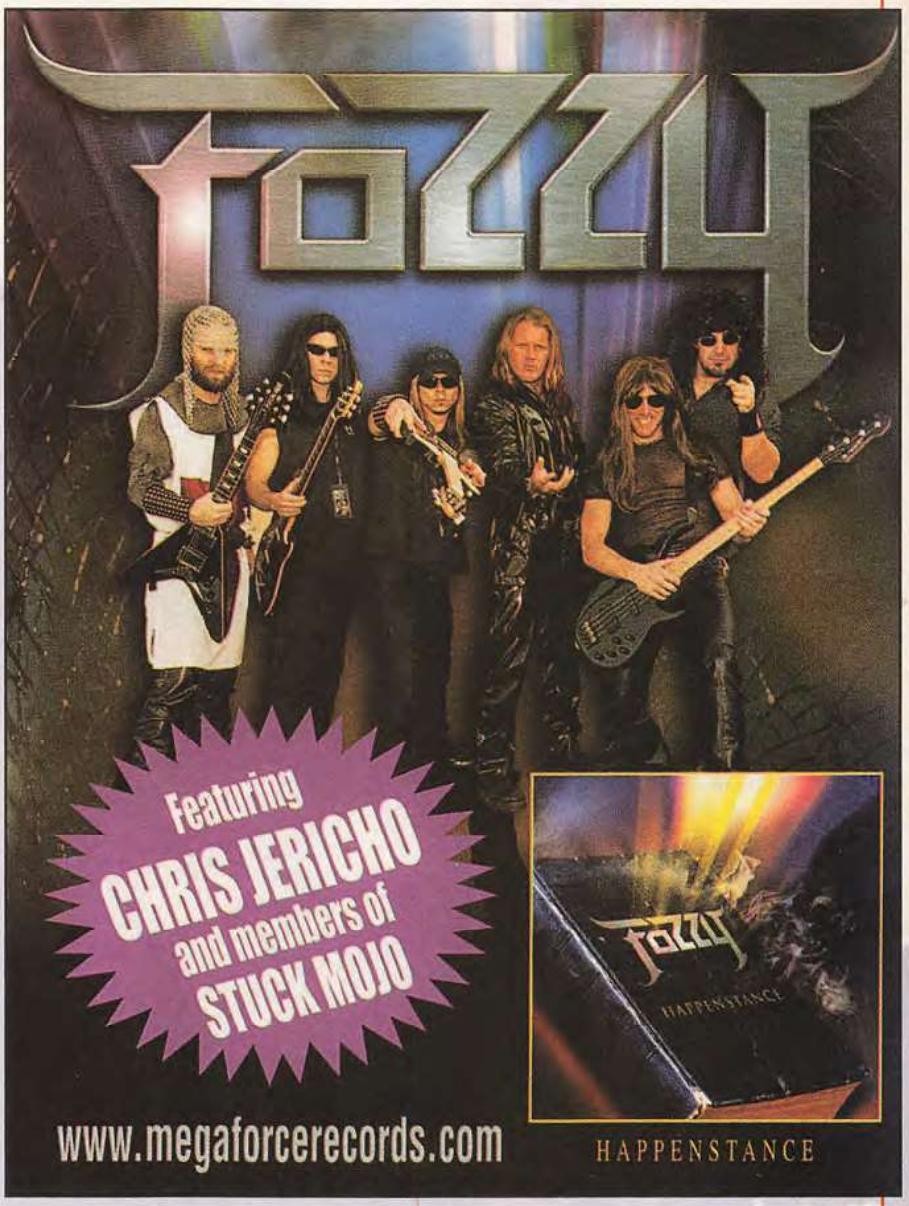
CJ: Yes, exactly.

NW: Are you surprised by his real life?

CJ: Not really. As I've said, I'm a big fan of Ozzy's for 20 years, so I'm pretty aware of Ozzy and his family. I remember seeing his kids when they were babies; now I see them growing up and what they're growing into. It's like being a fly on the wall—watching someone else's life, I guess.

NW: I would think you can relate to the show—being on the road—coming home and wanting to get into the groove of home life again. Can you give the *New Wavers* an idea of what an average day off is like?

CJ: Well, my wife wants to go out, so I go out. She's at home when I'm gone, and I want to make sure that she's happy. There are some sacrifices involved for both of us with my traveling



schedule. I basically like to relax and not do too much. I like being at home and getting into a bit of a normal routine. That's the most important thing to me.

Once in a while I get a weekend off. Next week I have five whole days off so it's going to feel like a month [*Laughs*], that doesn't happen too often. You take the time when you can get it and then slip into a normal existence.

NW: Staying with this idea for a minute, some of the WWE's veterans like Pat Patterson and Tony Garea, who are now working behind the scenes, traveled and competed on the old regional circuits. Between tours, going from say the Georgia to Florida circuit, they would squeeze in a little time off before the new bookings started. Today it would seem that it's impossible to get any vacation time as you're part of the continuing storylines, working for one big national territory. Are you allocated a certain amount of time off per year or does it just happen, if it happens at all?

CJ: You don't get any time off. The only time off is when you're injured or if you specifically ask for a weekend off or a brief amount of time off, but there isn't any two-week vacation time or anything like that.

NW: How does that affect you psychologically? How do you rise up at times when you really don't want to?

CJ: Of course there are times when you need to recharge your batteries and get that time off.

NW: But if you don't get the time off. How do you handle it?

CJ: You just do what you do—plain and simple. Everyone has their own rituals they use to keep going—to keep from going crazy. You keep going. [*Laughs*]

NW: In the fields of music and wrestling, who are your idols? Do you see a reoccurring thread that links your heroes in both fields?

CJ: In wrestling, I've always been inspired by guys who really worked hard, who gave their all—Dynamite Kid and Shawn Michaels, for example.

In music, it's the same, guys with talent, personality and charisma. Guys who were very technical. I appreciated Steve Harris from Iron Maiden or Mike Portnoy from Dream Theater, or guys with out-and-out charisma like Ozzy, David Lee Roth or Paul Stanley. The same in wrestling—Junk Yard Dog, Hulk Hogan or Randy Savage. There are just different things that you look for.

NW: So there's no set thing. It's really the lure of talent that's the draw for you—the talent surging forth from certain performers which separates them from the pack.

CJ: Yes. Talent is the appeal, the draw. I'm sure it's the same for everyone else.

NW: We have Rufus the Wrestle Cat as our *New Wave Wrestling* mag mascot since 1992. Where is your mascot and spiritual adviser Ralphus these days? How did he arrive on the mat scene? Will we ever see Ralphus again in wrestling or maybe in a FOZZY video?

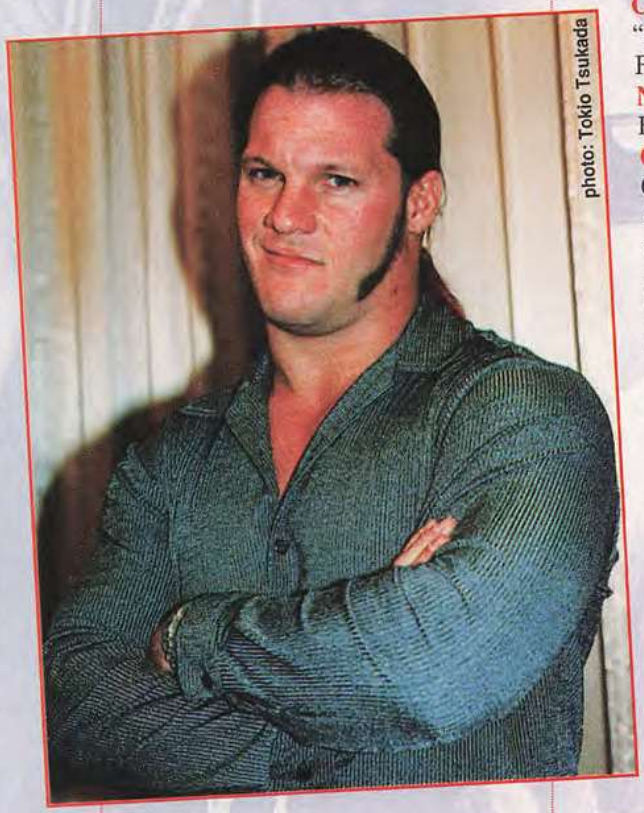


photo: Tokio Tsukada

CJ: Definitely not! You'll never see Ralphus again in the ring or in a FOZZY video. There is however a FOZZY mascot, Arthur, who suffers from Swinus. He has the face of a pig. Maybe we'll get him into the ring against Rufus the Ring Rat or whatever you call him. [*Laughs*]

NW: I know you're selflessly devoted to eradicating the deadly Swinus, but if a cure is found, wouldn't that decimate the WWE talent roster by roughly 98.732 percent?

CJ: Well, Swinus is not deadly. It's just a hindrance to your life. We don't have to eradicate it or anybody, it's just a hindrance. It's just more of an annoyance.

NW: Now I have to ask you a tough question. This is *New Wave Wrestling* and we ask the tough questions. When you regain the WWE belt, will "Bruiser Cunningham" get a title shot because you totally avoided him the first time?

CJ: "Bruiser" Cunningham? Oh! [*Laughs*] He'd best never show his face around here. Maybe we can arrange a Cunningham versus Ralphus match.

NW: Well, *Survivor Series* will soon be here, maybe you can put that idea in the WWE suggestion box.

CJ: Yeah, for a minute I forgot that "Bruiser" Cunningham was in the FOZZY documentary.

NW: Where can fans get the latest FOZZY news, tour dates & CDs?

CJ: *Happenstance,* FOZZY's latest CD is now on sale at all music stores. It is an enhanced CD containing photos and bios when placed in your computer. Included in the CD is a collector's guitar pick with one of the band members' names printed on it. You can go to the web site **www.megaforcerecords.com** for the latest information or you can write to Megaforce, P.O. Box 1955, NY, NY 10113.

NW: In closing, what's the funniest thing that ever happened to you as a wrestler or as a FOZZY band member?

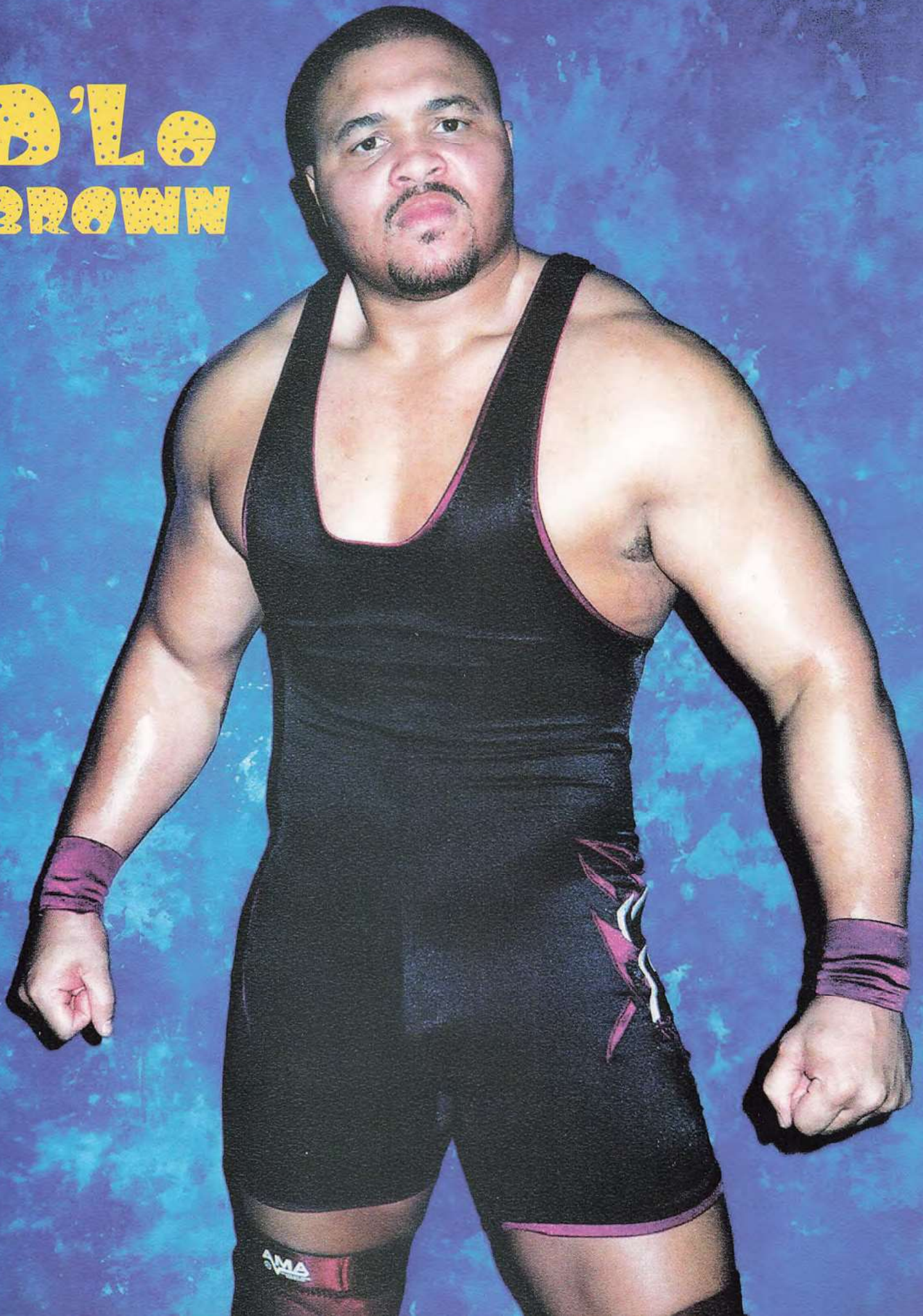
CJ: Well, FOZZY is becoming more of a self-fulfilling prophecy every day. On the documentary there is a scene where the band was doing a radio interview and the DJ referred to my character as "Mongoose" McQueen rather than "Moongoose." It's a pet peeve of mine. Anyway for the new recording each CD includes a guitar pick with a band member's name printed on it. I just received a bag of these picks and on every single pick, thousands of picks, guess what's printed on it? Mongoose McQueen! Here's life reflecting art. My pet peeve becomes a total reality, a self-fulfilling prophecy. [*Laughs*]

NW: Thanks so much, Chris, for your kindness and patience in doing this lengthy interview.

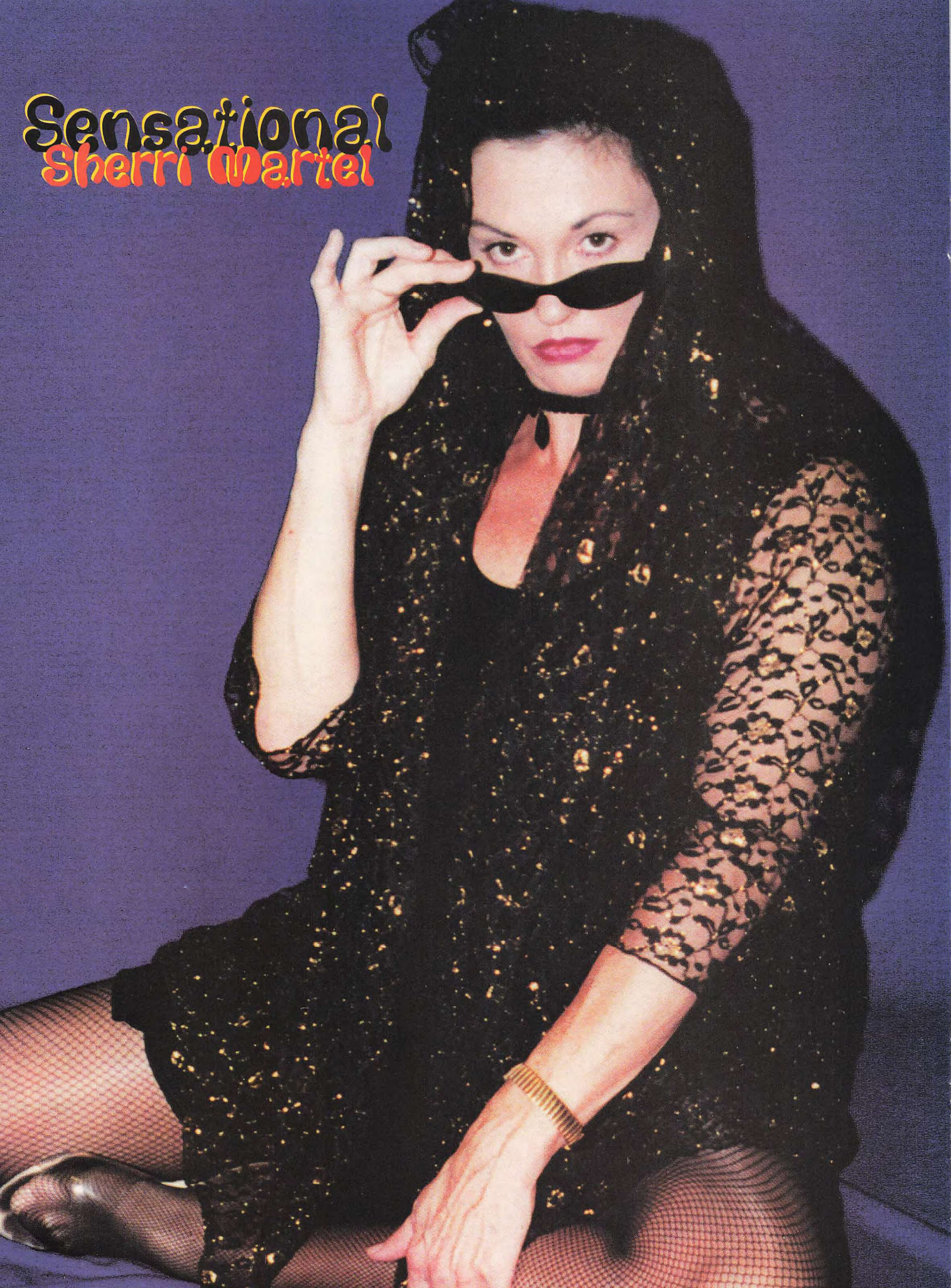
CJ: Thanks, I appreciate the interview and the support. **NWW**

"Moongoose McQueen"
Chris
Jericho

D'Lo Brown



The Island
BOYZ


Sensational
Sherri Martel

Sherri Martel

The Most Sensational Slamazon of Them All!

photo: Tony Valotta

NW: WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

SM: I'm going to really shock everybody and tell the truth for the first time. I was born outside of Birmingham, Alabama right on this little mountain. My mother didn't make it to the hospital. I was born in the living room at my grandfather's place. My mother almost died when I was born. It's because I was such a hell raiser from birth on. My grandfather had to elevate her feet so she didn't bleed to death, that's what kind of hell my mother started out with me. When I grew older, we moved to Louisiana, where I was raised. That's why I've always said I was born in New Orleans, Louisiana.

NW: Did you watch wrestling growing up?

SM: My mom got me started when I was really young, like eleven or twelve years old. I really didn't like it to begin with; I didn't get the concept. I had other things on my mind, such as clothes, horses, and anything that would get me out of the house. My mother is an avid wrestling fan, and it was in Mississippi that she first took me to the matches. I saw people like "Cowboy" Bob Kelly, Frank Dalton, Frank Morell, Grizzly Smith, Rocket and Eddie Monroe, and Jake Roberts when he was very young and had just started refereeing.

NW: What is your amateur athletic background?

SM: In wrestling, none. I played a little softball in high school. I was on the track team in high school. I did the high jump and 50-yard dash. Other than that, I don't have much of an athletic background. I'm a tomboy and just like to kick ass.

NW: Why did you decide to get into wrestling?

SM: My mom gave me no choice. I used to baby-sit my little sister and we would go to the roller-skating rink. One time I ditched my little sister to go on a date and my mom stopped that. So it was either I had to stay home or go to the wrestling matches with her. I started going to the wrestling matches and it just grabbed me. I was infatuated with it. They had matches at a little livestock stable. We would sit over the dressing room and the wrestlers used to throw stuff at our legs. We used to look down and see who was doing it. They wouldn't let on that they were doing it, but they kept doing it. [*Laughs*]

NW: What does your family think of your involvement in pro wrestling?

SM: They think that I'm just the most totally off-the-wall person in the entire family. I'm pretty much what you'd consider the black sheep. I'm the baby even though I have a younger sister.

My mom thinks it's great. As long as I'm happy, they don't

interview by Eric Shaffer

Velvet McIntyre and Sherri engaged in some of the most rugged grapplerette clashes of the late 1980s. photo: Michael O'Hara

really care what I do. My sister thinks it's cool. Both my mom and sister have traveled around with me a lot. My son thinks it's awesome.

NW: Who trained you?

SM: I started out in Memphis. I went to Grizzly Smith when I was just a teenager, but he told me I was too young. I was 16 at the time. He told me to come back when I was 21. During that time I went through a marriage and had a baby. I was 19 or 20 when I got divorced and moved to Memphis.

I trained with a wrestler named Butch Moore in Memphis, Tennessee. I trained with him for a year. The first time I walked into his school and told him that I wanted to be a wrestler, I had my money in my hand and put it on his desk. He got up, walked around his desk, looked me straight in the eyes and slapped the s%*t out of me. And I looked at him, shook it off and said, "Is that all you've got?"

NW: What an introduction! Do you remember your first professional match?

SM: I wrestled a girl named LuLu Gaines; it was for a local magazine in Memphis called *PM Magazine*. It was a local thing at the time. She was my very first match. I remember we beat the living s%*t out of each other. She busted my head open that first night when she hit me across the head.

NW: Did you have to overcome any stereotypes or criticism as a lady wrestler?

SM: I think every woman in the wrestling business has to overcome stereotypes because it's a male-dominated business. Women and midgets have always been considered novelties, so that's just one of the things you have to deal with when you work in this business. The hardest thing, pretty much, is gaining the respect of your coworkers. I've always conducted myself as a lady, and I've given the guys respect as professionals. I'm happy to say that most of the men I've met in this business are my friends. I can't think of any wrestlers that I don't like.

NW: Are men intimidated when they find out what you do for a living?

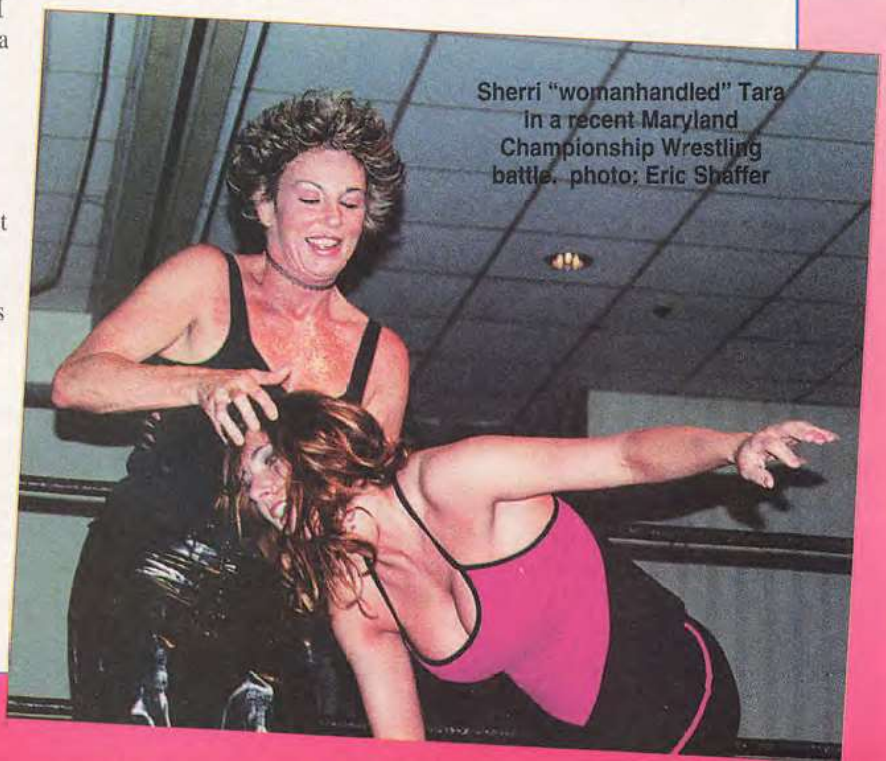
SM: Oh, yes. They really are intimidated by the fact that I'm a wrestler and that I make more money than they do. I think they're more embarrassed by that than they are intimidated by what I do, because they feel for some reason that they have to compete with me as a wrestler. And anybody that has any sense of security knows that they cannot compete with a wrestler. These are people that need to be confident in themselves.

NW: What is your opinion on the current state of women's wrestling?

SM: One of the things that I admire about what Vince McMahon is doing now is that he's requiring them to learn how to wrestle. Trish Stratus has come a long way; I saw her on *Raw* recently. Jackie's phenomenal herself. She's a crowbar. I remember when she dislocated my jaw in Memphis one night and put it back in the next night. I was eating through a straw for the next two months. I hope she didn't do that to Trish. Now I know why she's a referee. With all due respect, Jackie's a wonderful worker. Trish is a wonderful worker, too. The girls up there are doing what they're getting paid to do, and God bless them, I hope and pray they're having a good time doing it.

NW: With the abundance of women wrestlers on the independent circuit, why do you think there are so few in WWE?

SM: Well, I think the WWE is always looking at their developmental territory, so they had their girls picked down there. What they're failing to notice is the other girls on the independent level. I was at an all-girls card in Warren, Ohio recently. There were 15-20 girls there and each one of them knew how to wrestle. They had their techniques down and they were phenomenal. It was just a hell of a show. Everyone in that crowd



Sherri "womanhandled" Tara in a recent Maryland Championship Wrestling battle. photo: Eric Shaffer

got their money's worth. It was excellent. The WWE just needs to open their eyes a little bit more.

NW: What other lady wrestlers do you respect or admire?

SM: I admire all the women wrestlers. I've been up and down the road with Madusa, Rockin' Robin, Desiree Petersen, Velvet McIntyre, Lelani Kai, all the lady wrestlers. What I find really interesting is that all the lady wrestlers I saw last night have a really great heart and a desire to succeed in this business as I did. I appreciate that they're getting out there. I wish you could have seen these gals, it was amazing. Vince is really missing out on some great stuff; I hope that he opens his eyes.

NW: Who has been the most influential person in your career?

SM: I've been influenced by each and every person that I've ever met, because everybody in this business has something to offer. They gave me constructive criticism and always did it lovingly. Everybody has affected my life at one point or another. Most of it I can honestly say has been for the positive, with the exception of independent promoters. Independent promoters stink. The only exception is Maryland Championship Wrestling's Corporal Punishment Danny McDevitt at Bonebreakers Training Center,

NW: Why don't you like independent promoters?

SM: Independent promoters degrade talent. They have no respect. Young promoters come into the wrestling business thinking they're God's gift to the wrestling business. They also think if I could just let Vince see me. Well, I'll tell you what, young promoters, if Vince saw you, he'd probably take you in the back and take a s%*t on you—you aren't worth the toilet paper that you need to wipe your ass with. I just really had to get that off my chest. [*Laughs*]

NW: What advice would you give to young women who are interested in becoming a wrestler?

SM: I would advise them to call Bonebreakers here in Maryland or a reputable school that is in their area. I've been around numerous schools across the United States and the world, and Bonebreakers has impressed me more than any other school. The reason I'm saying this is because the students that graduate from Corporal Punishment's school are the very best. They are respectful, and they are taught the basics. They don't even get on top of the ropes until they get the basics down. They learn ring psychology, one of the most important aspects of a professional's career.

A lot of the kids that are coming out of these little backyard wrestling companies are jumping off houses and that's no way to start a career. You have to go to school and get serious training. The way to get that training is to find someone who has been there before; someone who has been up and down the road; someone who has paid their dues; someone that knows how to run an independent show; someone who is personable and knows how to treat you as a person and be on a personal level with you, to be able to guide you in the wrestling business.

If you try to do it without any legitimate training and come into pro wrestling with a cocky attitude that you are going to be on top and go over and do this and that, forget it. Get with the program. Turn around and go back home. If you don't want to come into the profession and be humble and respect the great athletes who have been here before you, you don't need to be here. It's all about respect.

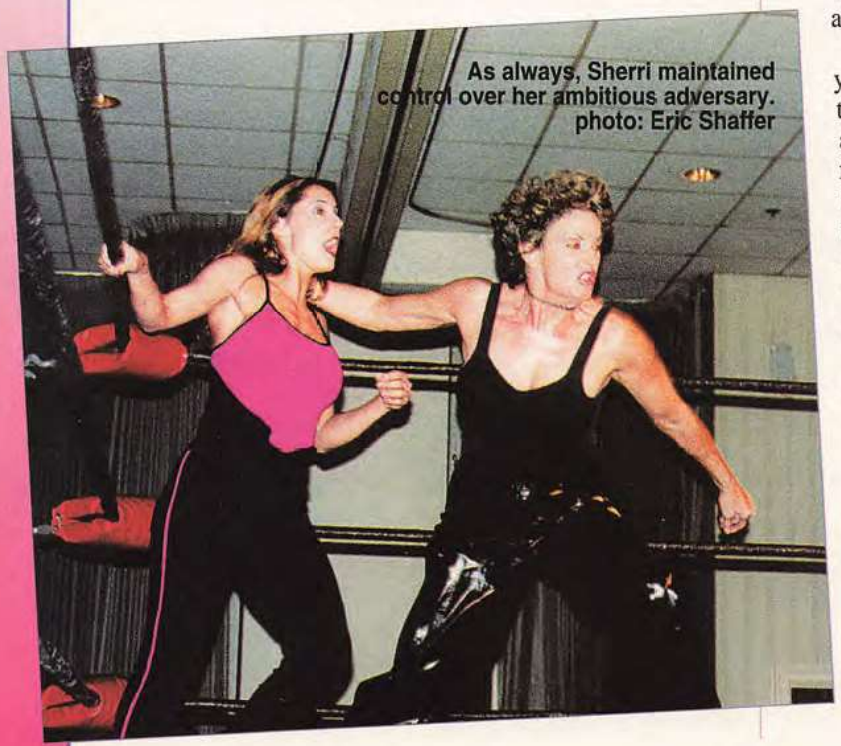
NW: Will you still wrestle later in life as Fabulous Moolah and Mae Young occasionally do?

SM: No. NO! [*Laughs*]

NW: Thank you very much for your time.

SM: You're welcome. NWW

The legendary lovely catches up on the latest mat scoops! photo: Eric Shaffer



As always, Sherri maintained control over her ambitious adversary. photo: Eric Shaffer

THE ROAD WARRIORS

photo: Tokio Tsukada

NW: HOW DID YOU START IN PRO WRESTLING?

A: Hawk and I have known each other since we were eight years old. We were weight training and power lifting when we met Paul Ellering, who we knew because he was a junior champion power lifter. Paul was in Chicago because Georgia Championship Wrestling was holding tryouts for tag teams; we went and got lucky and won. The rest is history. We just kept on going from there.

NW: Was Paul Ellering your trainer?

H: He was our mentor.

A: Also Eddie Sharkey, Jesse Ventura, and Bob Backlund trained us. Everything fell into our laps very fast.

NW: How did you come to team up?

A: Well, that was a no brainer. They saw a picture of me and a picture of Hawk.

H: They knew we were friends.

A: Our nicknames are with us since we were kids. They asked what our favorite movie was and I liked the *Road Warriors*. That was a natural fit for us.

H: I took the name Hawk over the name Beak as a child because I didn't like Beak. [*Laughs*]

NW: Who gave you guys your first big break in wrestling?

H&A: It was Ole Anderson and Georgia Wrestling.

NW: Did you ever work under other names?

A: No. Only have been and only will be the Road Warriors.

NW: How did the territory system work when you first broke into the business?

A: Everybody had their own hit. Don Owens ran Portland. Joe Blanchard ran San Antonio. You had Verne Gagne's AWA, and Ole Anderson and Jim Barnett ran Georgia. You had Jim Crockett Promotions in the mid-Atlantic, and the Rougeaus in Canada. Lia Maivia ran Hawaii. Baba and Antonio Inoki ran All Japan and New Japan.

In the beginning we spent our time in Georgia. Then we went to the AWA. We never burned out a territory. We only stayed in one place one or two years, then we'd go back to Japan for one or two years and to Montreal for a couple of months. That was done on purpose and it was all directed by Paul Ellering, so we never got too established in one area.

H: Fans get burned out. We spent time away from the fans by going to the Orient and Europe. We had fun there; we made our money and then came back to the United States, where we were always welcomed back.

We've been in this business for 20 years. No tag team has lasted as long. That is a record. We are like brothers. We are brothers. I love him and he loves me, that's what makes this thing tick. I believe harmony creates cash and controversy creates cash. I don't believe in degradation of society like some elements in wrestling now. I don't believe it's good for kids.

A: That's where the WWE made a mistake. For a while they had Jerry Lawler insulting all the guys who made it big in this business by saying they were old and have been in the business for years. Who do they have at the top now? Hogan and Flair. Why? Because they draw the most as individuals in this business besides the Rock and Austin. It's all about credibility.

Hawk and I are together 20 years, and people forget we broke in when we were 20 and 22 years old. Stan Hansen had a great career in Japan for 35 years. Brody would've lasted that long if he didn't get killed. It's just a number in this business. As long as we stay in shape and do our job, we'll keep going. There will

interview by Craig Prendergast

never be another tag team like us again.

H: There have been a lot of duplicators which we take as a form of flattery. There was Demolition. There's been a lot of face painting and haircuts since we came out 20 years ago.

A: The Nasty Boys. Not the Nasty Boys because you've got to be in shape to be a Road Warrior. [*Laughs*] No offense to those guys, they're great guys and are good friends of mine. They're a great tag team. We've had many battles with them, but our thing was our look and the persona that prevailed.

A lot of imitators try to become bad apples. We were a product of the way we grew up. We just naturally acted the way we were and went with it. It worked.

H: My very first match with Animal was in Georgia Championship Wrestling. I clotheslined the guy, but I was so green I forgot to cover him. I got out of the ring. Animal and Paul Ellering told me to get back in the ring and cover him, so I dove between the top rope and the second rope and landed on him.

Ole Anderson didn't know how we were going fix that. He was going to have me do an interview but changed his mind. I told him to let me do the interview. I talked to the late, great Gordon Solie, who said that was a different way of pinning someone and would I like to explain it. I said that in Chicago we knock them out, we don't lay on them, so it made sense.

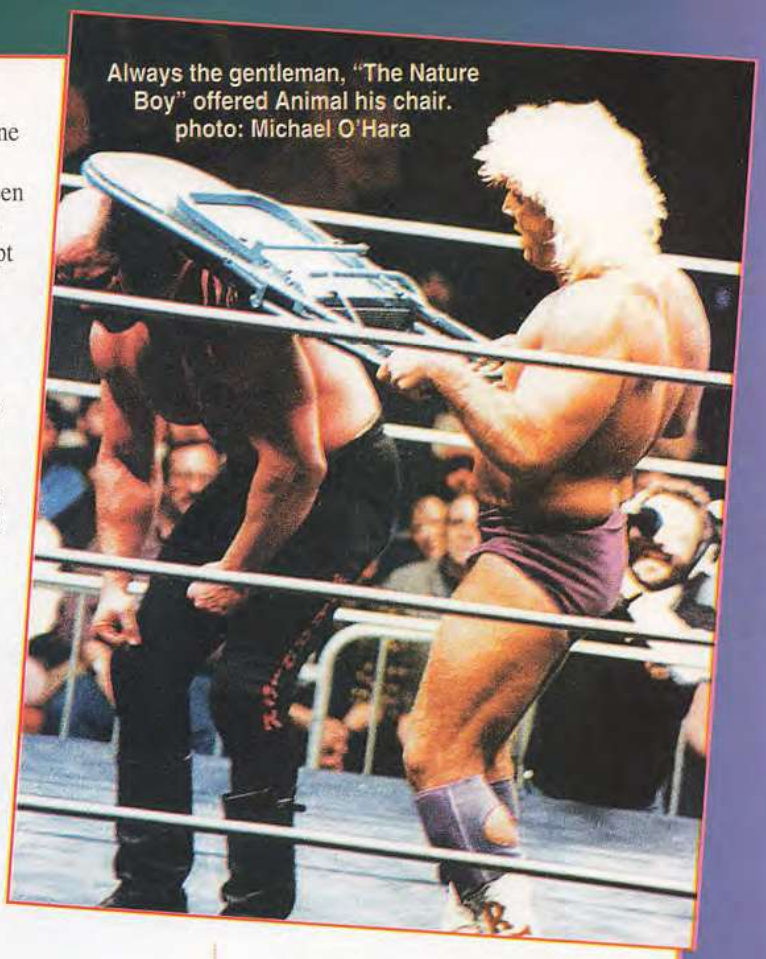
NW: How did you come to work for the AWA?

H: We're both born in Chicago, but our fathers were in the computer business, so we moved to Minneapolis. When we moved there our relationship continued and everything went sky-high.

NW: How was your relationship with Verne Gagne?

A: Verne could've been in Vince McMahon's shoes right now except he couldn't graduate with the way it was going. If he had listened to the guys in the office running the promotion, he would have been able to do it. Verne was stuck in yesteryear. Hawk and I were doing what was right for the business.

It was a good relationship. We made him a lot of money, sold out a lot of houses for him. Verne paid us well, that was before contracts came about. I can't say anything negative in that sense.


Always the gentleman, "The Nature Boy" offered Animal his chair.
photo: Michael O'Hara

H: I'm not a big fan of the WWE and the way they're going, but I will say that Vince McMahon is a very good artist at what he does. He needs to stay in his category because the World Bodybuilding Federation and the XFL didn't work out; he needs to stay in his own genre, and what we're going to do is bring some game to him.

NW: Getting back to the AWA. How did you lose the tag belts on a count out?

A: The AWA was so screwed up at the time, I don't even remember the match. I'm not being conceited or cocky, but Hawk and I have had so many titles it's hard to remember something that happened in the AWA.

Was it Jim Garvin and Steve Regal? That was in Denver. Because we are businessmen, I think that probably was a hand slap; things had to be done and that's what we did.

H: We liked the guys we worked with. Garvin and Regal were great.

A: The AWA created an element of surprise. We literally threw them around the whole nation for a year. Nobody expected it and that's why they did it.

NW: What brought you into the NWA?

H: Ole Anderson first brought us into Georgia Wrestling, then Jim Crockett's NWA took it all over and signed us to the first guaranteed contract that anyone ever signed to get us to come in.

A: As a result of what we did, Nikita Koloff, Sting, Ric Flair all followed suit. Our lawyer handled Sting's contract. The whole business changed. I don't think the business can rise to a higher level than it is now. What can you possibly do that people have not seen? That's why they brought back the Hulkster.

Hawk and I are still popular because things always come back around. You've got to get back to family enter-

Hogan and Tenryu received the double-gorilla press treatment in Japan.
photo: Koichi Yoshizawa

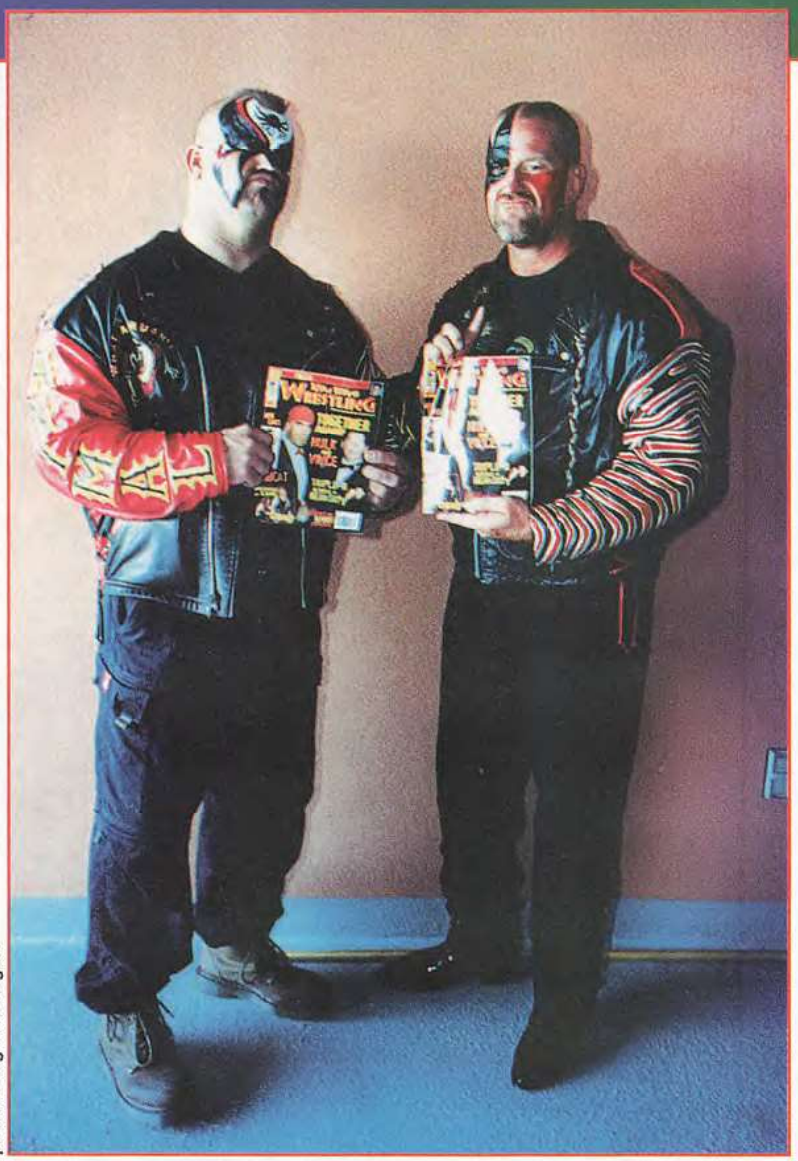


photo: Craig Prendergast

tainment. That's what grew the business. It got away from that for 10 years. That's why arena attendance is the size it is now.

H: You'll see McMahon follow suit; he knows that's the way it's going to go because the competition is coming back. Groups like the XWF and IWS are trading talent.

NW: Tell us about the scaffold match with the Midnight Express and how Jim Cornette fell from the scaffold.

H: Boss Man—Big Bubba at the time—was supposed to catch him from below.

A: I was holding Cornette's arms. Boss Man was underneath with stupid glasses on. I looked down at him and he shook his head. I let Cornette go—he went slap. It was like someone threw a hunk of ham against concrete. Both his knees blew out.

Jim Cornette was great. That was one of my favorite times working with Dennis and Bobby and Stan Lane, too. They were the funniest. The Four Horsemen—particularly Flair, Arn, and Tully—are responsible for our gimmick being what it is today.

H: We are ever indebted.

A: They taught us things we would've never learned from anyone else. We'd watch Bobby and Dennis fighting each other outside the ring and just crack up.

H: We had to bite the rope to stop from laughing.

NW: How did they get you up on the scaffold?

H: They paid us. [*Laughs*]

A: Being the competitors we are, we did stupid things like dropkicking on the scaffold. First time in Atlanta we climbed up there during *The Great American Bash*; we were all excited. Hawk was in front of me. All of a sudden Hawk grabbed on to the top rail; they didn't have the clips fastened and he pulled it off. I pushed it back on.

NW: Do you keep in touch with Paul Ellering?

H: I just talked to him three days ago.

NW: Is he still your manager?

A: Paul is going to be our manager until the day we die. He'll be with us here and in Taiwan.

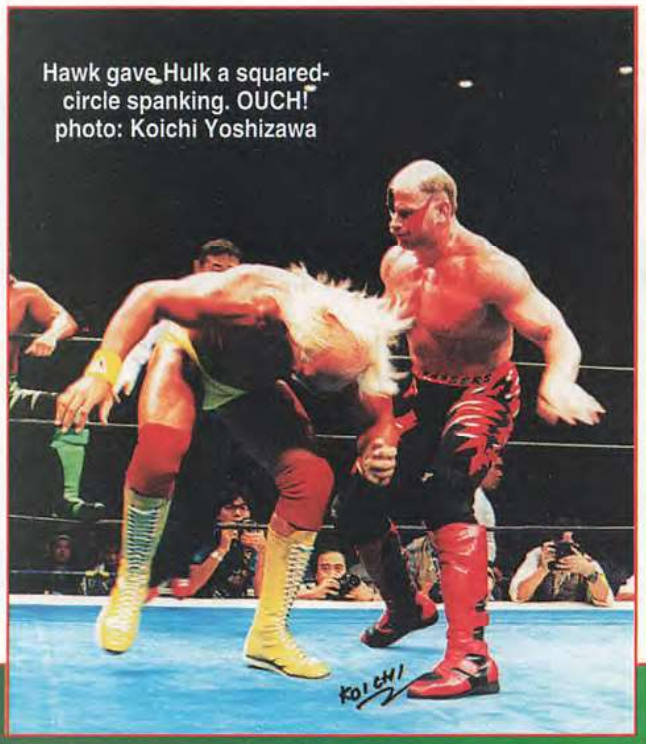
H: The man has an IQ of 162. He is a phenomenal, outgoing guy and an honest person. We want him in the IWS. There will be no unhappiness in our locker room because unhappy people will not be here very long.

A: This is the perfect thing for your magazine. If this isn't new wave at it's best, I don't know what is. We have guys who have been phenomenally popular in this business—"Hacksaw" Duggan, Buff Bagwell, and "Dr. Death" Steve Williams. We're not here to compete with the WWE. If you're going to compete with them, you're going to die. We're here to offer family entertainment, an alternative with good versus evil. You don't have to have a lady taking her clothes off and a guy drinking a beer to get a pop from the crowd.

H: You're also not going to see a promoter take off his pants and have a wrestler kiss his butt.

A: Not only that. I've gotten calls from a few people saying that many WWE guys don't take the time to stop and talk at the arena. Hawk and I have always taken care of the press and the fans. We may have been guilty of it our first year in the business because we didn't understand, but once we understood where our bread and butter came from, we changed.

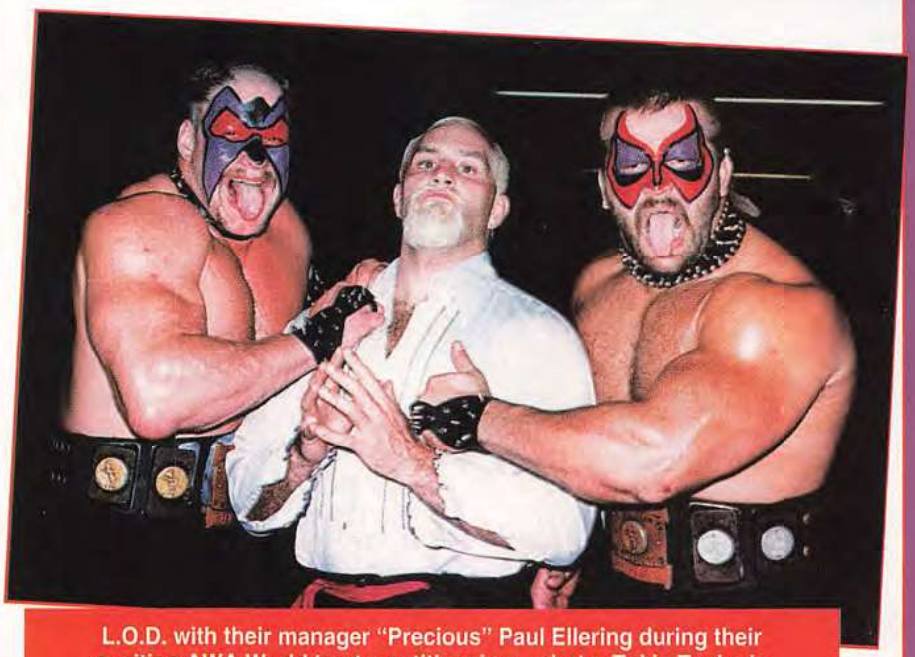
It's not going to be like that here. Before every event there's going to be fan appreciation time, an hour where the fans can take pictures, get autographs, meet and mingle with the guys.



Hawk gave Hulk a squared-circle spanking. OUCH!
photo: Koichi Yoshizawa

H: We also gave a humanitarian award to Droz from the WWE, who is paralyzed from the neck down, for what he's done in wrestling and for the mishap that happened to him.
NW: Was he at the New Jersey show?
H: Yes, he's a New Jersey native.
A: We were going to take Droz under our wing and make him a team member.
NW: That's right, you did make him part of your team.
A: At the time when it started, Vince did it as a rib, but we didn't see it as a rib. We saw potential in Droz. I liked him. He had a good look for our gimmick. He had heart and was hardworking. He made it to the Denver Broncos. He also had a good nickname. [*Laughs*]
H: I had him at the *Brawl for All* and he's a tough guy.
NW: How do you respond to people who say that you've worked a stiff style over the years?
H: That's the way we've reached where we're at— by not being so soft in the ring. Even though everybody knows it's sports entertainment, fans still want to see some hardcore wrestling that looks real. When you wrestle the Road Warriors you will feel some pain, and we will take some pain, too.
A: We've never complained about anybody who cut us open or kicked us in the teeth. Mistakes are going to be made. Bruno Sammartino got his neck broken by Stan Hansen on a slam. Accidents happen and they're going to continue to happen.

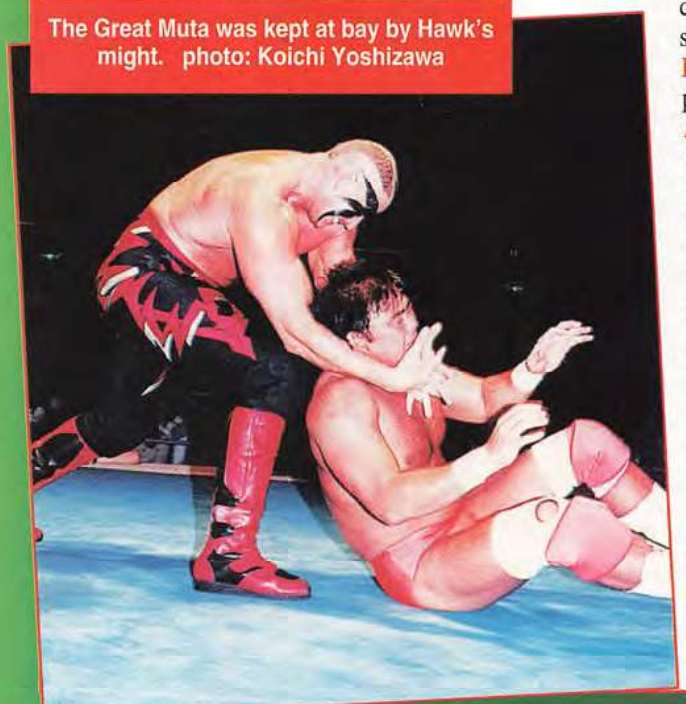
There are certain situations, like in Japan, that calls for a certain style of performance. We had to come out like street fighters and react and adapt to their wrestling world. This is what we had to do, and that is exactly what we did.



L.O.D. with their manager "Precious" Paul Ellering during their exciting AWA World tag-team title reign. photo: Tokio Tsukada

H: When we came back from a stiff wrestling tour of Japan, we might have accidentally clobbered some guys a few times because we were in that mode.
NW: What changes did you see in NWA when it became WCW?
A: People don't realize the NWA has always been WCW. They just dropped the call letters NWA. I believe someone from Virginia was the primary owner of the NWA title. The concept was always the same.
H: NWA was the best part of our career.
A: That was probably the bulk of our career. When we had our first title, we came to talk to the WWF in 1989. Everybody around the country appreciated what we did, except Vince.
H: We weren't his creation.
A: We owned our names, our likenesses, and everything else since day one. He had the gall to tell us that people may not know who we were when we wrestled in New York. He put us against the Hart Foundation, who were the champions, and we got a standing ovation. We ticked him off a little bit.
H: It's a lot of head games with Vince. He's controlling, narcissistic and always testing you.
A: He's a master at it. You've got to give him credit. He's a billionaire; he did what he did.
NW: You left WCW and went to the WWF. Were you happy with the way you were used there?
A: We were never used to our full potential at the WWF. We were there in 1990-91 and we were No. 1 or 2 in sales and marketing for them. Again nobody knew us. [*Laughs*] We were second only to the Ultimate Warrior and the British Bulldog. We all sold equal amounts of merchandise at *SummerSlam* in Wembley, England attended by 90,000 fans. We had it both good and bad.

The problem with the WWF was you only got one half of a percentage of what you sold and that is a crock. Guys should be getting at least 10 percent of merchandise sales to make it worthwhile. They're missing out on millions of dollars. We didn't let it happen.
A: It was a good career move. We probably should have toured in 1987 when we first talked to him. We didn't go, and I think Vince got mad. He created Demolition, his own Road Warriors.
NW: Why did you turn Vince McMahon down?
A: We were getting a guaranteed con-



The Great Muta was kept at bay by Hawk's might. photo: Koichi Yoshizawa

photo: Michael O'Hara

tract from Crockett. Vince wouldn't guarantee.

H: At the same time, we were the first wrestlers to work for two major organizations at one time—the AWA and NWA. They were both wooing us, but Jim Crockett wooed us better.

A: Jim gave us what we wanted, which was a three-year contract. Vince didn't want to do it. When it was over, we went to Vince again. He approached us. We went to his house and had a nice Chinese meal. We thought everything was going to be the same way it was. He showed us the numbers, what Piper, Hogan, what everybody made. He gave us his word that we'll make the same amount and it never came true.

H: It was close, but not close enough.

A: He was a few hundred thousand dollars off; it's harder when you have a tag team because it's double the pay, but you don't tell somebody you're going to do something and not do it.

We gave it another chance and went back, but it was the same story. He did the drunk thing with Hawk atop the Titantron. We said that's enough. Our gimmick is based on kids. They told us they're going darker. We said see you later.

H: Our lawyers told us we had a clause in our contract that said we had to be used as babyfaces in a positive light. Vince wasn't using us in a positive light. That was our out. Vince had us sit on our butts for the last year of our three-year contract. He never utilized us. He could have had us do autograph sessions, but he chose not to. Our relationship with Vince has not been as friendly as with every other promotion. I don't think that's our fault.

A: It's just amazing to me now that the wrestling business is coming back to exactly what made it what it was—Hulk, Flair, Road Warriors, everything. It's coming back full circle. People believe in the heroes that made the business what it was.

H: They want to see what they grew up with.

NW: What stands out as your proudest accomplishment?

H: Staying together for 20 years and winning every title there was to win—New Japan, All Japan, AWF, AWA, NWA, WCW, WWF. We are the only tag team to ever stay together for 20 years and the only tag team to win every belt there was to win.

A: Probably will never happen again, the titles don't exist anymore.

NW: Why have you stayed together?

H: We truly love each other.

A: It's a respect thing. Animal is no good without Hawk.

H: And Hawk is no good without Animal.

A: A lot of people wanted to separate us and have us wrestle each other. We stuck to our guns. That won't happen.

NW: You never wrestled each other?

A: No, what's the reason for it? I don't believe in guys like us wrestling each other. I thought the Steiner Brothers wrestling each other was the stupidest thing I have ever seen. Who believes that two brothers are going to wrestle each other? Hawk and I have known each other since we were kids and we've been together through thick and thin. Why would people want to see us fight? If you have to stoop to that level to draw money you're doing something wrong. That's why I firmly believe in great talent. You can't have all your eggs in one basket, in one Hulk Hogan.

H: The second time we came back to Vince his ratings were down. He was losing to WCW for the first time and he brought us in for ratings. We got what we wanted contractually because he needed us. We did well with him. The ball was in our court. We wish the best to Vince McMahon and the WWE, too. It just wasn't our piece of pie.

NW: Is there anything left you'd like to accomplish in the business?

H: We'd like to make the IWS very, very successful.

A: We like the IWS and XWF and we wish them both good luck. We feel whichever company gets us is going to be lucky. We have the opportunity to pass the torch to new upcoming guys in the wrestling business.

We would like to wish the best to the new Taiwanese promotion and we look forward to having a great relationship with Bai Sai [*White Lion*] and the Taiwan Wrestling Federation as well as Mr. Billy Yan with DNA Home Technologies.

We would also like to give our condolences to the family of Wahoo McDaniel.

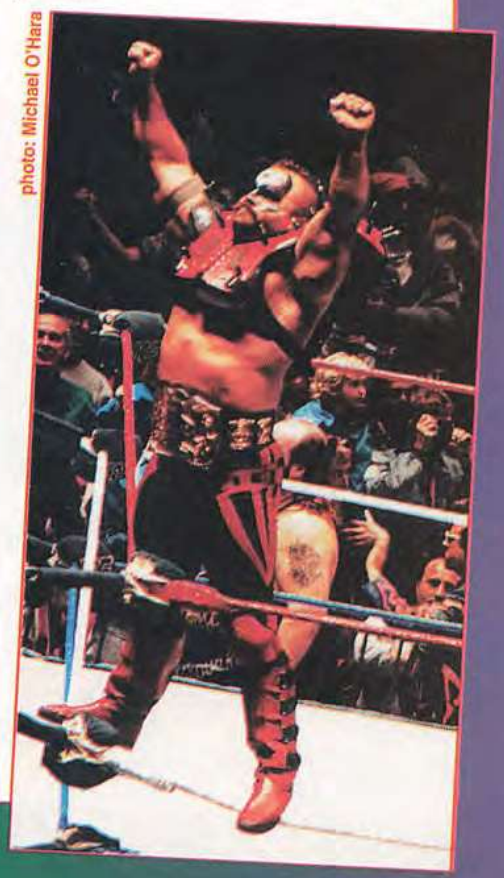
H: Wahoo was one of our mentors.

NW: What are your goals for the International Wrestling Superstars?

A: I wouldn't put my reputation or my contacts on the line if I didn't see something positive happening in the future with them. My future is the Taiwan connection. I think the IWS has great insight and connections to make this a big-time company.

H: Spread the love, brother.

NW: Thank you both very much for your time. **NWW**



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All-Star Wrestling Vol. 1 Bob Orton Jr. vs. Rick McCord. Assassins vs. Vinnie Valentino & Steve Muslin. Orton Jr. & Dick Slater vs. Scott McGhee & Muslin. Assassins vs. McCord & Keith Larsen. Orton Jr. & Slater vs. Terry Gibbs & John Bonello.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 3 Rick Steamboat & Jay Youngblood vs. Bill Howard & Jerry Grey. Bugsy McGraw vs. Tom Lentz. Jack & Jerry Brisco vs. Rick McCord & Keith Larsen. Dory Funk Jr. & Jake Roberts vs. Glen Lane & Keith Larsen. Kabuki vs. Storer.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 4 Chavo Guerrero vs. Ben Alexander. Rick Steamboat & Youngblood vs. Howard & Lynch. Dick Slater vs. Keith Larsen. Roddy Piper & Wahoo McDaniel vs. Kiniski & Alexander. Kabuki vs. Larsen. Greg Valentine vs. Bonello.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 5 Ric Flair & Bob Orton Jr. vs. Bill Howard & Jerry Grey. Charlie Brown (Jimmy Valiant), Terry Gibbs & Brickhouse Brown vs. Kelly Kiniski, Grey & Lentz. Mark Lewin & Kevin Sullivan vs. Valentino & Bonello. Assassins vs. Larsen & McCord. Rufus Jones & Bugsy McGraw vs. Grey & Lentz. Baron von Raschke vs. John Bonello.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 6 Mark Lewin & Kevin Sullivan vs. J. Bonello & Garth Hart. Assassins vs. Terry Gibbs & Steve Muslin.Chavo Guerrero & Wahoo McDaniel vs. Lentz & Mark Lewin. Briscos vs. Haven & Fleming. Assassins vs. Davis & McCord.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 7 Ric Flair & Wahoo McDaniel vs. Tom Lentz & Jerry Grey. Assassins vs. Mark Fleming & Keith Larsen. Rufus Jones & Charlie Brown vs. Jerry Grey & Magic Dragon. Youngbloods vs. Jerry Grey & Kelly Kiniski. Wahoo McDaniel vs. Bill Howard.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 8 Steve Muslin & John Bonello vs. Assassins. Rufus Jones & Mike Rotunda vs. Joel Deaton & Kiniski. Greg Valentine vs. Muslin. Magic Dragon vs. Chavo Guerrero. Masked Charlie Brown (Jimmy Valiant) vs. Ben Alexander.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 11 Kamala vs. Butch Reed. Chavo Guerrero vs. "Fabulous One" Steve Keirn.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 13 Dog-collar match: Buzz Sawyer vs. Jim Duggan. Jake Roberts vs. Dick Slater.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 16 North American title: Butch Reed vs. "Dirty" Dick Slater.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 17 Nightmare & Humongous vs. Jake "The Snake" Roberts & Jim Duggan.

All-Star Wrestling Vol. 18 Al Perez, Ricky Gibson & Hector Guerrero vs. Steve Williams, Eddie Gilbert & The Nightmare.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 1 Bob Orton Jr. vs. Karl Kox. Zapata vs. Mr. Olympia. Samoans vs. JYD & Mike George. No DQ: Dusty Rhodes & Dick Murdoch vs. Samoans. Wrestler/mini women's mixed tag: Diamond Lil & Rick Ferrara vs. Barbie Doll & Tony Charles. Samoans vs. Junk Yard Dog & Brian Blair.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 2 One Man Gang, Samoans & Skandor Akbar attack Ernie Ladd. Iron Sheik vs. Kobra. Ted DiBiase vs. Paul Orndorff. Samoans vs. Ferrara & Bill Ash. JYD vs. Bob Roop.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 3 Jimmy Garvin (with Precious) vs. Billy Brooks. Steve Regal & Jim Garvin vs. Wahoo McDaniel. JYD vs. Grappler. Orton, Jr. (w/ Orndorff & Samoans) vs. Mike George (w/ Dusty Rhodes & JYD). Ed Wiskowski & Orton vs. DiBiase & Mr. Olympia. Terry Orndorff vs. The Junk Yard Dog.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 4 David & Kerry von Erich vs. Gene Yates & "Killer" Karl Krupp. Nick Bockwinkel vs. Manny Fernandez.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 5 Bruiser & Bruno Sammartino vs. Baron von Raschke & Ernie Ladd. Crusher, Bruiser, & Little Bruiser vs. Bobby Heenan & Blackjacks. Tully Blanchard vs. Manny Fernandez.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 6 Andre vs. The Sheik. "Chief" Jay Strongbow vs. Don Kent (shark cage). Bruiser Brody & Scott Casey vs. Spoiler & Kelly Kiniski. Pampero Firpo vs. Jeff Doney.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 7 Terry Boulder (Hulk Hogan) vs. Andre the Giant (arm wrestling). "Cowboy" Bob Ellis vs. Bobby Heenan.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 8 Nick Bockwinkel vs. Magnum T.A. Tito Santana vs. Kelly Kiniski. Ivan Putski vs. Eddie Mansfield.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 9 Tully Blanchard vs. Wahoo McDaniel. Sheik vs. Tom Jones. Bobo Brazil vs. Michael Angelo.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol 10 Mud match: Sheik vs. Tiger Jeet Singh. Hulk (Hogan) Boulder vs. Outlaw. Tully Blanchard & Gino Hernandez vs. Scott Casey & Magnum T.A.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 11 Terry Taylor vs. Sabu Samoa. Wahoo McDaniel, Marty Jannetty & Tom Rogers vs. The Grapplers & Ted Oates.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 12 Short clips & full bouts with Gorgeous George, Fritz von Erich, Yukon Eric, Buddy Rogers, Bobo Brazil & more.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 13 Butch Reed vs. The Giant Kamala.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 14 Jim Duggan vs. Ted DiBiase.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 15 Ric Flair vs. Terry Taylor.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 16 Ric Flair vs. Wahoo McDaniel.

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 17 Ted DiBiase & Steve Williams vs. Hector & Chavo Guerrero (cage bout).

Super Wrestling All Stars Vol. 18 Fantastics & Jim Duggan vs. Midnight Express & Jim Cornette.

World's Greatest Wrestling Vol. 1 Nick Bockwinkel vs. Fernandez. Hulk Hogan vs. Lawler. Sheik vs. Lewin.

World's Greatest Wrestling Vol. 2 Randy Savage & Lanny Poffo vs. R&R Express. Blondes vs. PYTs. Randy Savage vs. Jerry Lawler (cage).

World's Greatest Wrestling Vol. 3 Andre the Giant, JYD & Dusty Rhodes vs. Samoans & Ernie Ladd. Tony Charles vs. Paul Orndorff. Iron Sheik vs. King Kobra. Zapata vs. Mr. Olympia. Bob Orton Jr. vs. Jim Garvin.

World's Greatest Wrestling Vol. 4 JYD vs. Bob Roop. DiBiase vs. Paul Orndorff. JYD & Brian Blair vs. Samoans. Ed Wiskowski vs. DiBiase. JYD & Mike George vs. Samoans.

World's Greatest Wrestling Vol. 5 Randy Savage & Lanny Poffo vs. R&R Express. Rick Rude, Jim Neidhart, Ox Baker & Assassin vs. Robert Reed, Tiger Mask, Keith Eric & Mad Dog. Road Warriors vs. Austin Idol & Jerry Lawler. Terry Boulder vs. Outlaw.

World's Greatest Wrestling Vol. 7 Lawler vs. Kamala. Ray Stevens, Blackjack Mulligan & Baron von Raschke vs. Crusher, Dick the Bruiser & Sailor Art Thomas.

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AWA's Greatest Title Matches Rick Martel vs. Jumbo Tsuruta. Nick Bockwinkel vs. Verne Gagne. Rick Martel vs. Michael Hayes.

Bad Guys (1985) Two police officers join the rasslin' ranks in this farce-filled film featuring Sgt. Slaughter, Taru Tanaka, Alexi Smirnoff & many others.

Body Slam (1987) A sleazy talent agent decides to promote rock 'n' roll & pro wrestling. Features Roddy Piper, "Captain" Lou Albano, Tonga Kid & others.

Combat Sports® Mat Movie Classics Vol. 1 Gorgeous George's feature-film debut—*Alias the Champ* (1949).

Jim Garvin & Steve Regal The talented twosome battle The Road Warriors, Scott Hall & Curt Hennig & others.

Greatest AWA Tag-Team Bouts Curt Hennig & Greg Gagne vs. Freebirds. "Crusher" Blackwell & Sgt. Slaughter vs. Road Warriors. Mr. Saito & Nick Bockwinkel vs. The Gagnes.

Greatest Sports Legends: Bruno Sammartino Highlights of the WWWF champion's career including clips against Spiros Arion, Stan Hansen, "Killer" Kowalski, Ernie Ladd, Gorilla Monsoon, Buddy Rogers & The Sheik.

Greatest Sports Legends: 101 Superstars Highlights of the great sports figures including WWWF World champion Bruno Sammartino, plus Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and dozens more!

Grunt! The Wrestling Movie (1987) Pro-wrestling star "Mad Dog" Joe DeCurso mysteriously disappears. Some fans think he's dead, why others speculate that he's become a newcomer called The Mask! Features many top stars including: "Exotic" Adrian Street, John Tolos, Victor Rivera, Dick Murdoch, and many more!

Hulk Hogan's AWA Battles Hulk vs. Nick Bockwinkel. Andre & Hulk vs. Heenan, Duncum, Bockwinkel & Ken Patera.

Japan's Greatest Women Wrestlers Yukari Omori & Ayumi Hori vs. Noriyo Tateno & Itsuki Yamasaki. Masked You & Kaoru Matsumoto vs. Lioness Asuka & Nagayo Chigusa. Rimi Yokota vs. Las Garacita. Rimi Yokota vs. Tenjin Masami.

Mad Bull (1979) Alex Karras plays a pro wrestler troubled by his devotion to the traditions of his Greco-Roman mat past.

Madison Square Garden's Greatest Wrestling Antonino Rocca against Don Leo Jonathan, Lou Kim, Primo Carnera, and two title bouts with NWA World champ Lou Thesz. Lord Leslie Carlton vs. Johnny Barrend. "Killer" Kowalski vs. Verne Gagne & Gene Stanlee.

Midget Madness A lightheartened look at Sky Low Low, Little Mr. T, Little Tokyo & others.

Mil Mascaras vs. Los Vampiros de Cayoacan (1968) Matdom's masked great battles ghouls, werewolves & vampires in this classic mat flick. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Neutron vs. The Maniac (1960) The masked hero battles a killer (dubbed in English).

Neutron vs. The Death Robots (1961) Matdom's superhero battles the ultimate killing machine (dubbed in English).

Neutron and The Black Mask (1962) Mexico's hero collides with crooks and their handy bomb! (dubbed in English).

Neutron vs. Dr. Caronte (1962) Our star battles a scientist and his monsters! (in English)

No Holds Barred (1952) The Bowery Boys tackle rasslin' gangsters in this film featuring many greats. Also—*Rasslin' Match*—an Amos & Andy cartoon!

Not-So-Great Moments in Sports Vol. 2 (1988) Weird moments in the sporting world including highlights of Jack Dempsey vs. "Cowboy" Luttrell, Muhammad Ali vs. Antonio Inoki and Chuck Wepner vs. Andre the Giant in boxer vs. wrestler bouts!

The One And Only (1981) Henry "The Fonz" Winkler stars in this flick loosely based on the career of "Gorgeous" George.

Pro-Wrestling's Greatest Heroes Lou Thesz vs. Vic Christy. "Argentina" Rocca vs. Benito Gardini. Ed Carpentier vs. Baron Mikel Scicluna. Ricky Starr vs. Karl von Hess. Bruno Sammartino vs. "Magnificent" Maurice. Verne Gagne vs. Lee Hennig. Gene Stanlee vs. Kola Kwariani. Bobo Brazil vs. Johnny Barrend. Sam Steamboat vs. Mike Sharpe Sr. Great Scott & Rocca vs. Karl & Eric von Hess.

Pro-Wrestling's Greatest Matches Bruno Sammartino vs. Fred Blassie. Buddy Rogers vs. Johnny Valentine. Ed Carpentier & Antonino Rocca vs. Skull Murphy & Pampero Firpo. The Kangaroos & Dr. Jerry Graham vs. Antonino Rocca, Miguel Perez & Ricky Starr. Buddy Rogers vs. Bobo Brazil. Lord James Blears vs. Baron Michele Leone. Mr. Moto vs. Henry Hank. Joe Louis vs. Sky High Lee. Nick Bockwinkel vs. Matt Murphy. Gallaghers vs. "Magnificent" Maurice & Johnny Barrend. Primo Carnera vs. Jim Londos. The Sheik vs. Jim Melby. Buddy Rogers vs. Pat O'Connor.

Pro-Wrestling's Greatest Villains Dr. Jerry & Eddie Graham vs. Antonino Rocca & Miguel Perez. Buddy Rogers vs. Abe Jacobs. Fred Blassie vs. The Hangman. "Killer" Kowalski vs. Yukon Eric. Fritz von Erich vs. Bobby Brown. The Millers vs. Kangaroos. Crusher vs. Johnny Valentine. Gorgeous George vs. Larry Moquin. Bruiser & Hans Schmidt vs. Volkoffs. Jack Allen & "Bavarian" Rudy vs. Sicilians.

Racket (Pindown) Girls (1950) Mobsters take advantage of innocent girl grapplers.

Rikidozan Japan's mat legend in action against Bobo Brazil. Plus! A tag-team battle against Brazil and his partner Lord Althol Layton. **(IN JAPANESE • NO SUBTITLES!)**

The Road Warriors LOD vs. Curt Hennig & Baron von Raschke and The Hennigs.

Santo vs. The Zombie Invasion (1961) A mad scientist and his monster army seek world conquest (dubbed in English).

Santo vs. The Vampire Women (1961) Wild, wild stuff!

Santo in the Wax Museum (1963) A scientist turns people into wax figures (in English).

Santo's Secret Caribbean Mission (1968) The masked mauler tackles drug dealers. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Santo vs. The Strangler (1964) There's a wild man on a murder spree. **(IN SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Santo and El Tesoro de Moctezuma (1968) The Silver star battles warriors of the past. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Santo vs. The Yellow Mafia (1975) The silver mask versus Yellow Dragon & his drug gang. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Santo vs. Blue Demon in Atlantica (1968) Mexico's two grapplin' greats team to stop an undersea monarch. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Santo & Blue Demon in The World of the Dead (1979) The dynamic duo clash with a ruthless gang of zombie robbers. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Santo's Mystery of the Black Pearl The masked man finds romance and intrigue. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Sgt. Slaughter Vol. 1 Sarge battles Larry Zbyszko, Boris Zhukov, and battle-royal action.

Sgt. Slaughter Vol. 2 Matches with Zbyszko, Zhukov & others.

Secrets of Pro Wrestling This video exposes how all the exciting mat moves are done!

Super Argo (1966) Argo versus humanoids in this Italian entry into the wrestling-hero genre!

Thunder in Paradise Two-hour TV pilot with Hulk Hogan.

Thunderground (1989) The saga of a bare-knuckles brawler (Paul Coufos) and his quest to battle "The Man" (Jesse Ventura), the king of bare-fisted battle.

UWF Wrestling Vol. 1 UWF champion Steve "Dr. Death" Williams vs. "Mr. Wonderful" Paul Orndorff in a lumberjack match featuring Cactus Jack, Don "The Rock" Muraco, Tom Brandi & others.

UWF Wrestling Vol. 2 "Wildman" Jack Armstrong & Cactus Jack vs. Chief Strongbow & David Sammartino. The Blackhearts vs. Dave Johnson & Joe DeFuria.

UWF Wrestling Vol. 3 Steve Williams vs. Paul Orndorff in a cage match. "Cowboy" Bob Orton Jr. vs. B. Brian Blair. Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Samoan Afa.

UWF Wrestling Vol. 4 Paul "Mr. Wonderful" Orndorff battles Steve Williams, "Cowboy" Bob Orton Jr. & "Spitball" Patterson.

Wacky World of Sports Bob Uecker hosts a program featuring sports bloopers including a profile on Hulk Hogan and the 1980s wrestling craze.

The Wrestling Assassin (1961) A country sheriff tracks down a murderer who happens to be a masked, wrestling champ. **(SPANISH/NO SUBTITLES!)**

Wrestling Funnies Vol. 1 A lighthearted look at the top wrestlers and valets.

Wrestling Funnies Vol. 2 Another volume of silly slams & hilarious holds featuring Ric Flair, Ron Garvin, JYD, The Rock & Roll Express & more!

Wrestling's Golden Era Vol. 1 Mark Lewin vs. Ox Baker. "Crusher" Verdue vs. Frankie Laine. Garth Vader vs. Stan Stasiak. Sheik vs. Stasiak. Jerry Graham vs. T-Bolt Patterson.

Wrestling's Golden Era Vol. 2 Mickey Doyle & Billy Red Lyons vs. Angelo & Lanny Poffo. Stan Stasiak vs. Don Kent.

Wrestling's Golden Era Vol. 3 Features "Argentina" Antonino Rocca, Dick the Bruiser, The Sheik & Women wrestlers!

Wrestling's Golden Era Vol. 4 Bruno Sammartino vs. Hans Schmidt. Dr. Jerry & Eddie Graham vs. Antonino Rocca & Miguel Perez. Bobo Brazil vs. Sky Hi Lee. The Kangaroos vs. Moose Cholak & The Mighty Atlas. Skull Murphy & Brute Bernard vs. The Bavarian Boys.

Wrestling Queen 1970s documentary on female wrestler Vivian Vachon—features Andre the Giant, The Blackjacks (Mulligan & Lanza), Vachons ("Mad Dog" Maurice & "Butcher" Paul) & many others!

Wrestling Spectacular Vol. 1 Andre the Giant vs. The Spoiler. "Bruiser" Brody vs. The Twin Devils. "Maniac" Mark Lewin vs. Dusty Rhodes. "Killer" Tim Brooks & Ivan the Terrible vs. Tiger Conway Jr. & Tiny Tom in a mixed big man/mini match. Victor the Wrestling Bear vs. Manager Gary Hart.

Wrestling Spectacular Vol. 2 Ken Patera vs. Jose Lothario. Leroy Brown vs. "Killer" Tim Brooks. Wenona Little Heart vs. Judy Martin. Dusty Rhodes vs. Ivan Koloff in a Coffin Match.

Wrestling Spectacular Vol. 3 Dusty Rhodes, Dick Slater & Ricky Steamboat vs. Black Bart, "Outlaw" Ron Bass & Tully Blanchard. Manny Fernandez & Buzz Tyler vs. Dory Funk Jr. & Black Bart. Barry Windham & Mike Rotunda vs. Kelly & Gary Royal. Greg Valentine vs. Steve Muslin. Ivan Koloff & Don Kernodle vs. The Youngbloods.

Wrestling Spectacular Vol. 4 Jake Roberts vs. Humongous. "Hacksaw" Jim Duggan vs. "Mad Dog" Buzz Sawyer. The Bruise Brothers (Mad Dog & Pork Chop) vs. The Bushwhackers (Luke & Butch). Jake Roberts vs. Dick Slater w/Dark Journey. Also—a Bunkhouse battle royal!

Wrestling Spectacular Vol. 5 The Great Kabuki vs. Steve Muslin. The Assassins vs. Rick McCord & Keith Larson. Ricky Steamboat & Jay Youngblood vs. Gary Royal & Kelly Kiniski. Mark Youngblood vs. Dick Slater. "Brickhouse" Brown & Gene Ligon vs. Ivan Koloff & Don Kernodle. Tully Blanchard vs. Brett Hart (Barry Horowitz). Chief Wahoo McDaniel & Charlie Brown (Jimmy Valiant) vs. The Assassins. Mark Youngblood & Angelo Mosca vs. Magic Dragon & Bill Howard

Wrestling Women & The Doctor of Doom (1961) Beware—a demented doctor and his monster are on the loose! (dubbed in English)

Wrestling Women vs. Aztec Mummy (1963) The gorgeous grapplerettes battle a mad mummy (dubbed in English).

Larry Zbyszko "The New Living Legend" collides with such stellar AWA competitors as Sgt. Slaughter, Greg Gagne & Larry Winters.

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Legendary Wrestling Vol. 1 "Wild" Red Berry & Bud Curtis vs. "Crippler" Carl Davis & John Tolos.

Vol. 2 Fred Blassie & Warren Bockwinkel vs. Joe Pazandak & Mr. Moto. Plus an episode of the 50s program—*Pro-Wrestling Drills*.

Vol. 3 Wilbur Snyder & Freddie Blassie vs. "Wild" Red Berry & Jack "Sockeye" MacDonald (2/3 falls).

Vol. 4 Warren Bockwinkel vs. Wilbur Snyder, plus an interview with "Crippler" Carl Davis.

Vol. 5 "Sockeye" Jack MacDonald vs. Wilbur Snyder (2/3 falls).

Vol. 6 Lisowski Bros. vs. Lord Layton & Frank Townsend. Bob Orton Sr. vs. Adrian Baillargeon. Tony Marino vs. Roy McClarity. Hans Schmidt vs. Bobo Brazil.

Vol. 7 Sandor Szabo vs. Great Bolo. Lord Blears & Lord Layton vs. Joe Pazandak & Mr. Moto. Don Arnold vs. Larry Hamilton.

Vol. 8 Mr. Moto & Carl Davis vs. Wilbur Snyder & Sandor Szabo. Interviews with Lord Carlson, Davis, Szabo & Snyder.

Vol. 9 Pat Fraley vs. Pat McGill.

Vol. 10 Ricki Starr vs. Frank Fonzo. Hombre Montaña vs. Paul Bunyan. WWA Title: Eduoard Carpentier vs. "Legs" Langevin. Dick Beyer vs. Bob Brown. Ilio DiPaolo vs. Hans Schmidt.

Vol. 11 Verne Gagne vs. Roy McClarity. Don Leo Jonathan vs. "Tiger" Jack Moore.

Vol. 12 Dick the Bruiser & Hans Schmidt vs. The Volkoffs. Bronko Lubich vs. Jack Allen. Paul Anderson vs. Bozo Brown (Frank Hickey).

Vol. 13 Antonino Rocca vs. Hans Schmidt (referee Joe Louis). Bill Melby vs. The Great Yamoto.

Vol. 14 Reg Lisowski & Balk Estes vs. Baron Arena & Kostas Davelis.

Vol. 15 Yukon Eric vs. Hans Schmidt. Larry Chene vs. Hessell.

Vol. 16 Yukon Eric vs. Hans Herman. Rasputin vs. Pat O'Connor.

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Vol. 19 Verne Gagne vs. Lee Hennig. Timothy Geohagen vs. The Masked Marvel. Gene Stanlee vs. "The Black Panther" Jim Mitchell.

Vol. 20 Fritz von Erich vs. Ilio DiPaolo. Guy & Joe Brunetti vs. Doc & Mike Gallagher.

Vol. 21 Brother Frank Jares vs. "Argentina" Rocca (2/3 falls—referee Mike Mazurki) + a Rocca interview!

Vol. 22 Great Togo & Red Berry vs. Ernie & Emile Dusek (2/3 falls).

Vol. 23 Don Eagle vs. "Dangerous" Danny McShane. (2/3 falls).

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Vol. 26 Jack MacDonald vs. Baron Leone. Chief Big Heart & Great Scott vs. Dr. Jerry Graham & Roy Shire.

Vol. 27 Tom Renesto vs. Butch Madre. Andre Drapp vs. Ace Freeman.

Vol. 28 Reggie "The Crusher" Lisowski & Art Neilson vs. The Mighty Atlas & Billy Goelz.

Vol. 29 Cal Bowser vs. Bamboo Taboo. Women: Olga Baranoff vs. Hanka Kavetzka. John Milas, Amir Jojo, Bobby Bruns, and The Indian in a four-way elimination bout. Highlights of Carl Johnson vs. Chief Gray Wolf.

Vol. 30 The Great Togo vs. Vic Christy. Pat McGill vs. Enrique Torres.

Vol. 31 The Great Scott vs. Danny McShane (2/3 falls).

Vol. 32 Gorgeous George vs. Jesse James (2/3 falls).

Vol. 33 Fred Blassie vs. Mr. Moto (2/3 falls).

Vol. 34 "Wild" Red Berry vs. Fred Blassie (2/3 falls).

Vol. 35 Pacific Title: Baron Leone vs. Rito Romero (2/3 falls).

Vol. 36 Tony Morelli vs. Andre (Angelo) Poffo. "Wild" Red Berry vs. "Cyclone" Anaya (2/3 falls).

Vol. 37 Al & Ramon Torres vs. Art Mahalik & Mike Sharpe Sr. The Great John L. vs. Al Torres. Stan Halek vs. George Drake. WWA Title: Ed Carpentier vs. Art Mahalik.

Vol. 38 World Tag Trophy: Reg "Crusher" Lisowski & Art Neilson vs. Rudy Kay & Benito Gardini. "Legs" Langevin vs. Pat O'Connor. Jerry Christy vs. Angelo Poffo.

Vol. 39 Pacific Title: Baron Leone vs. Fred Blassie (2/3 falls).

Vol. 40 "Wild" Red Berry & Bud Curtis vs. Great Bolo & Louie Miller (2/3 falls—two refs) + interviews!

Vol. 41 Mr. Moto vs. Wilbur Snyder (2/3 falls).

Vol. 42 Bob Korby vs. Don Lewin. Sandor Szabo vs. Roger Mackey (2/3). Danny McShane vs. Gino Garibaldi.

Vol. 43 Dr. Lee Grable vs. Ivan the Terrible. Vic Christy vs. Hans Schnabel. World Title: Baron Leone vs. Billy Varga (2/3 falls).

Vol. 44 Hard-Boiled Haggerty vs. Mike Valentino (Mikel Sciculna). Don Eagle vs. Ramon Lopez. Don Arnold vs. Tarzan Tourville.

Vol. 45 Pat Fraley vs. Ken Kulkovich. Dave Levin vs. The Bushman. Tony Morelli & Anton Leone vs. The Garibaldi Brothers.

Vol. 46 Great John L. vs. Nick Bockwinkel. Mike Sharpe Sr. vs. Negro Guzman. Broadway Venus vs. Mr. Moto. Fred Blassie vs. Felipe Mendoza plus interviews.

Vol. 47 Gorgeous George vs. Frank Talaber (2/3 falls) with special referee Boxing champ Jack Dempsey!

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His First American Interview in Over 20 Years!

ANTONIO INOKI

Japan's Living Legend

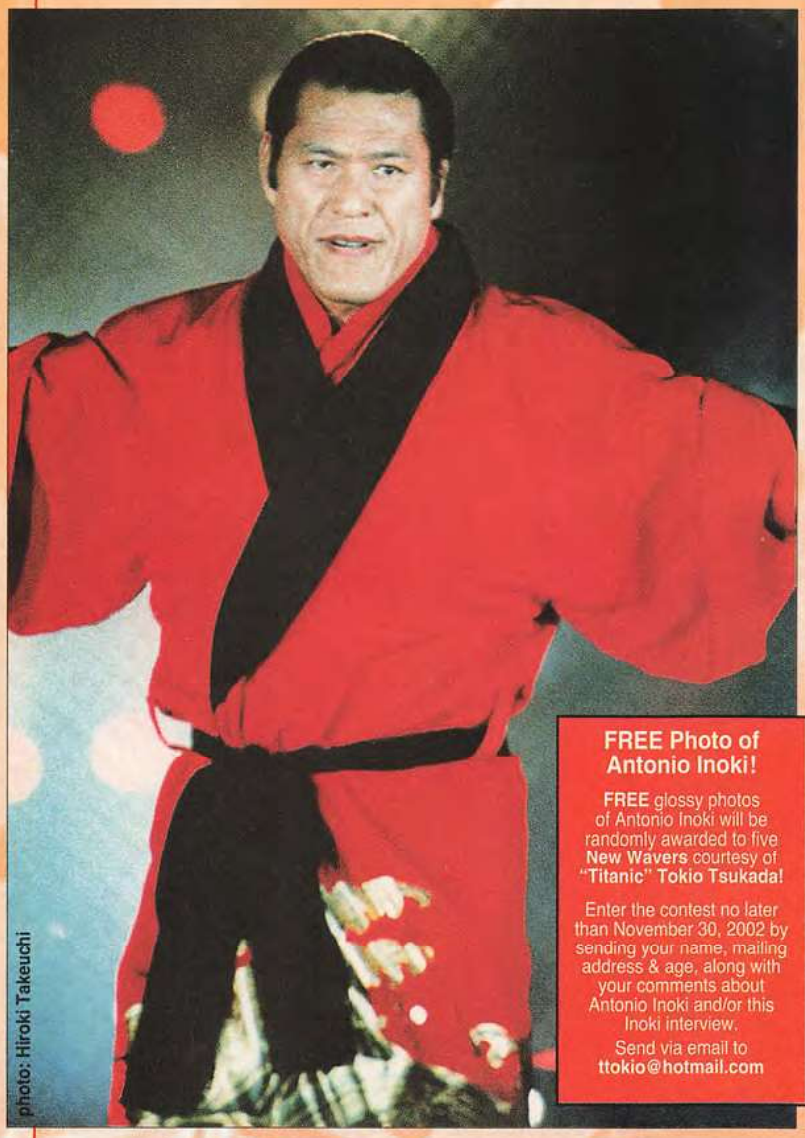

photo: Hiroki Takeuchi

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NW: MOST FANS STILL WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR FAMOUS BATTLE AGAINST MUHAMMAD ALI 25 YEARS AGO. WHAT DO YOU RECALL OF IT?

AI: As I spoke many times to the media [*Laughs*], I am here today because of that match with Muhammad Ali. It was not received well at that time, but now things have changed and the match is considered great. It was the beginning of the mixed martial-arts match between a pro wrestler and another martial artist from boxing, judo, karate, and others. Now we have K1 and Pride, promotions involved in martial-arts tournaments with wrestlers that sell out the big arenas in Japan. They are equivalent to the UFC in the U.S. The match with Ali was the beginning of pro wrestling involved with another martial-arts style.

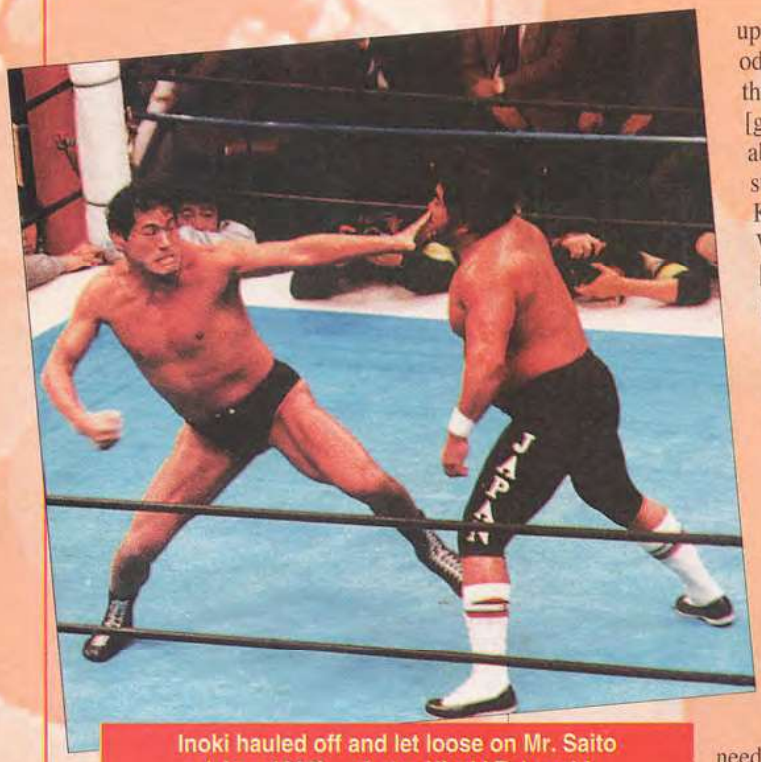
I had a very difficult time holding the match in Japan, and I suffered many things after the match, but because of that match, I am here today. The match between Ali and myself ended as a draw after 15 rounds. This disappointed me since Ali's punch did not hit me; I was mostly lying down on the ring attempting to low kick him. Many journalists reported the match as the most disappointing and boring ever in this century. After 25 years, journalists have recently reviewed the match and cited that it was real. They have now given it a higher evaluation. It is now looked upon as a mixed martial-arts event, such as K1 and Pride, and supported by many fans today.

Ali and I later confessed that we endured great stress from the high pressure before this match. Losing to one another was a great pressure as our own reputation as well as the reputation of pro wrestling and boxing were at stake. By having the match, our friendship became tighter and we frequently corresponded with one another. Ali came to my retirement match in Tokyo and to a special wrestling event held in North Korea. As I stated before, it was a hard time when the match was over due to the bad reputation and the bad deficits in business, but I was renowned worldwide and accepted by fans wherever I went. The match gave me tremendous assets as a pro wrestler.

NW: New Japan's Dojo opened in Los Angeles in April. I heard this means New Japan is aiming for a worldwide strategy competing against the WWE. Are there many American wrestlers trying to approach New Japan Pro-Wrestling?

AI: Yes, we've already been approached, especially by the "Ultimate" type of wrestlers. Our aim for setting this up has to

interview by Tokio Tsukada • Special Thanks to Mr. Itoh from Mr. Inoki's Office



Inoki hauled off and let loose on Mr. Saito (circa 1980). photo: Hiroki Takeuchi

do with the WWE. They were in their prime in the TV ratings when they competed against WCW a few years ago, but I believe the WWE went down in terms of its popularity with the fans. I've heard the WWE held a house show in Yokohama and it was a great success.

NW: They had big show in Yokohama with a crowd of 18,000 fans. All the tickets were sold out in 10 minutes.

AI: Fans like new things and they did well the first time. It will be more difficult for a WWE show in Japan next time. Pro wrestling in the U.S. was very popular and a top-10 TV program for years, but now the TV ratings are less than 3 percent. I don't keep track of their situation too closely, but someone told me that there was some article saying that the pro-wrestling business in the U.S. is getting better, but no way. It has hit rock-bottom. Look at the TV ratings, it went from being a top-10 show with 12-13 percent TV ratings, and now it's down to less than 3 percent.

It does not matter if it's in the U.S. or Japan, pro wrestling is now in a transitional time. It is about to change. I am moving faster than other promoters. I can see what will happen in the future while others are still doing the same thing. We need to make a big leap forward now and change.

There are so many different wrestling styles and wrestling holds depending upon the time period. My favorite is the Cobra Twist [grapevine hold, abdominal stretch]. The Ali Kick and the Western Lariat [clothesline] were popular among the fans at a certain time. When wrestlers enter the ring, they need to feel instantly what fans want, and they should perform in response to the demand of the fans. Pro wrestling in Japan needs to change as well as the WWE .

NW: You were in the U.S. back in the 1960s and wrestled against big names. You began wrestling in Hawaii, Kansas, and Tennessee. At that time, the NWA was in its prime and promoters were in abundance. How do you feel about the state of American wrestling today?

AI: Good wrestlers, such as Verne Gagne, Gene Kiniski, Dory Funk, Fritz Von Erich, and Eddie Graham, are gone. Why did those good wrestling circuits disappear? Is it because the WWE gained leverage? As for WCW, it was promoted by Eric Bischoff, who was not a wrestler. WCW's problem in one word was ego.

Vince McMahon is a promoter and he doesn't care about wrestling. He is concerned with the business of wrestling. Since Vince considers pro wrestling as a business, he does not stick with real wrestling.

In my situation, I have pride as both a pro wrestler and a wrestling promoter. I am here today because of that. I stick to the reality of pro wrestling, not just the business.

When things are good, the WWE tends to stay the course and keep the momentum going, but once business goes bad, it is easy to drop down into quick fixes. I don't mean to say bad things about the WWE as Vince McMahon is well respected and contributed to wrestling's media exposure on cable TV and pay per view; however, he gets away from what pro wrestling should be. He attains success and draws fans with a direction which is totally opposite from what I think wrestling should be.

New Japan Pro-Wrestling is now the center of attention. We have received software offers in the U.S. for the use of New Japan Pro-Wrestling matches held over the past 30 years. The interest has grown and the time is right for our expansion. I have been saying for a long time that I wanted to hold New Japan Pro-Wrestling events in the U.S. I was trying to enhance New Japan on a worldwide level before, but the economic situation and business crisis constricted my plans. We had to predominantly hold events in Japan.

When Muto, Kojima, Kashin and many office clerks left New Japan to join All Japan Pro-Wrestling, it was truly a great loss for us, especially losing Muto known as the Great Muta. All those things pushed New Japan to move faster. We opened the Los Angeles Dojo and held a big house show at the Tokyo Dome on May 2. What is happening is like the Zen saying "This is a case of good coming from bad." I always think positively and act aggressively to make my dreams come true. Things cannot be changed quickly. They need to change gradually over time. It was very critical for us to draw a crowd at the Tokyo Dome recently. It ended as a great success with 52,000 fans at the event.

photo: Taka Kanda

photo: Taka Kanda

The quality of the matches and the number of spectators are two separate issues. What McMahon refers to as success is arena attendance; he never cares about the contents of the matches. He is concerned with the attendance figures and the TV ratings, and that's a different concern from the caliber of wrestling. Wrestlers should pick up immediately on what people want.

NW: Please explain your worldwide strategy. Is there any specific plan to hold shows in Los Angeles since your Dojo has just opened there? What is the purpose of opening this Dojo in California?

AI: There are so many offers coming in, but unfortunately, I cannot respond to them all.

Besides all my wrestling projects, I am occupied with the energy problem. There is a new invention that will turn the law of energy upside down. I am very busy working on this exciting energy project. We recently held a press conference and have already received offers from more than 50 enterprises from around the world.

As for the Dojo, I feel it would be an ideal place to exchange spiritual and wrestling techniques with the wrestlers. A decade ago, it was totally different. In each U.S. territory, a wrestling promoter had his own circuit; if a wrestler did not do well in that region, he could move to another territory. By changing territories, a wrestler could find the best place to develop his own wrestling style. Today that is not possible, since the WWE has monopolized the market. As for New Japan, we don't have the opportunity to go abroad [to the U.S.], and almost no chance to contact unknown wrestlers from different territories. That is why the U.S. Dojo will be a great place to exchange and share what we have. Don Fry, Ken Shamrock, and Mike Coleman were here and wrestlers contact them through our Dojo.

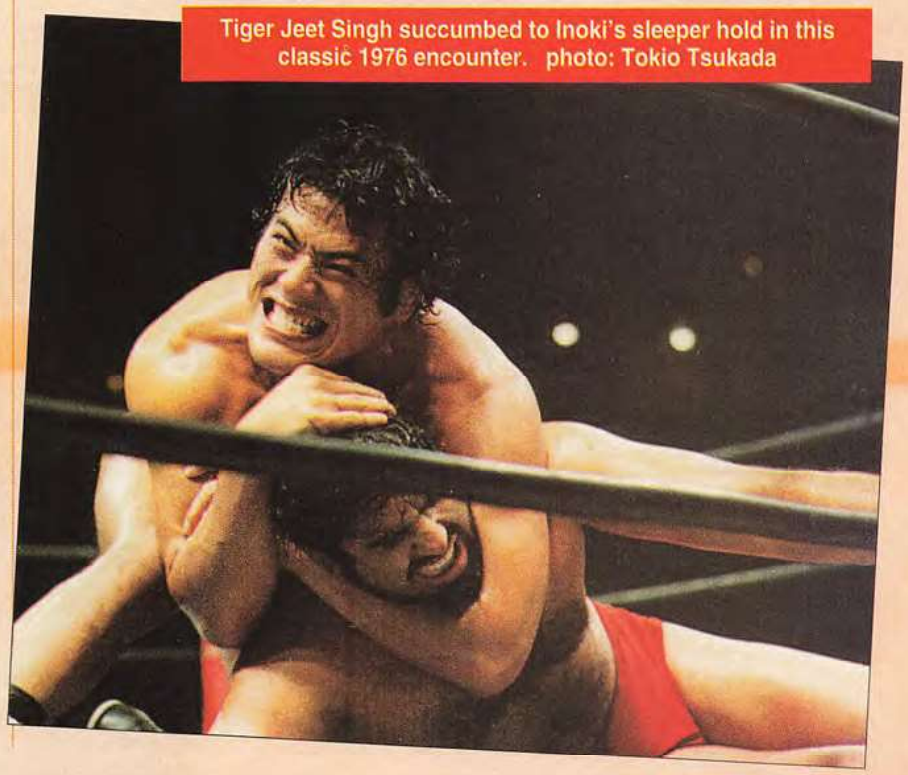
I don't have any specific plan to hold an event now, but I will see what will happen from these emerging American contacts. For any wrestlers who would like to enter New Japan's ring, they can come to the Los Angeles Dojo and get training and preparation for New Japan's strong style before coming over on a tour. Chyna [formerly of the WWF] came to our Dojo and asked me to get her into New Japan's ring. At the Tokyo Dome, Chyna was assigned as a special referee for the match between the Steiner Brothers against Kensuke Sasaki and Tanahashi. Considering Chyna's popularity in the U.S., having her in New Japan was beneficial for her and us. She confessed that she does not have any place to wrestle due to her complete break with the WWE some time ago.

NW: The L.A. Dojo is now open and there will be many opportunities to invite international wrestlers. American wrestling requires not only wrestling skills but also a talking ability for the TV interviews. This brings the fans into the arenas. It would be difficult for Japanese wrestlers to do that. How are you dealing with those difficulties? Do you have any advice for young wrestlers based on your experience?

AI: My English is not good enough. [*Laughs*] It is a good idea for them to come to Santa Monica and master English. The important thing is to go forward, take the first step. Former IWGP champion Tadao Yasuda first hesitated about coming to America, but now he is very active and comfortable living and wrestling in L.A. Once you move forward, you can adapt to different situations. Don't worry about it. Just do it! My job is to give wrestlers a chance. No one knows the future; I will just have to wait and see what happens with the new Dojo. Fans also are waiting to see what will happen, too.

NW: Yes, definitely—Japanese and American fans are interested. That is why this interview is being conducted, to find out more about it.

AI: American wrestling used to have microphone performances [wrestlers speaking out to the audiences]. I don't


Tiger Jeet Singh succumbed to Inoki's sleeper hold in this classic 1976 encounter. photo: Tokio Tsukada

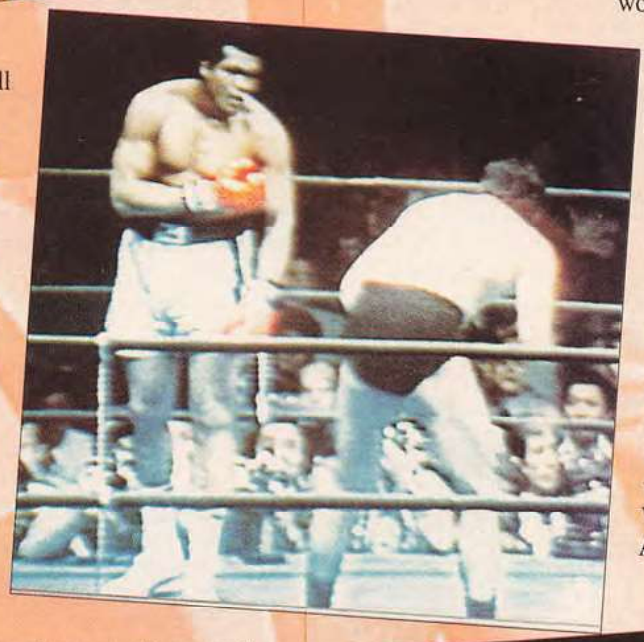
Ali & Inoki recently reflected on their 1976 mixed martial-arts match. All photos on this page: Tokio Tsukada

know if they still do it. Old fans still want to see solid wrestling skills. New Japan used to have their own style, but I cannot say with confidence this is my style of pro wrestling. Ultimate wrestlers like Don Fry, Ken Shamrock, and Mike Coleman all want to wrestle and exchange spirit the way I used to during my prime. Pro wrestling is not the WWE only. There must be a variety in wrestling. The sport has not changed. The business has changed and has become more popular among different generations. Are pro wrestlers respected in the U.S.?

NW: Pro wrestlers are recognized and their names are known among all ages. They are very famous and top wrestlers can be seen in major magazines and TV commercials. Jesse Ventura became governor of Minnesota. Pro wrestling gradually gained acceptance, however they are considered to be sports entertainment and still minor compared to baseball and football in the U.S.

AI: I still receive many fan letters from different generations asking to share my power. When I walk in the street fans approach me and ask for my vigor and energy by getting a slap in the face. One fan letter from a boy says he had recovered from illness, others say they conquered difficulties and spiritual agony. They were all released from their agony because they gained energy from watching my matches, shaking hands with me at the events, and sharing the vigor from a slap in the face. If you have vigor [energy], you can do anything.

What fans want from pro wrestling in Japan is different than the U.S, so our objectives are different. In the U.S., it's entertainment. In Japan, it's not the same, because our origins are different. Since there are different fans and preferences, I think Americans tend to enjoy wrestling as entertainment rather than for spiritual reasons. The origin of Japanese pro wrestling is derived from Rikidozan and it has not changed and should not change. Considering globalization, I am not thinking only about pro wrestling, but also about the energy crisis, environmental issues and politics. The U.S. pro-wrestling market is in decline and now it has shifted to Asia, including the economy. Apart from the economy, entertainment and sporting events tend to be expanding businesses. Dentsu [one of the biggest Japanese advertising agencies] is planning to launch events as part of its business. That movement creates a shift to Asia. There will be more focus on Asia in the future. There is a huge potential business for wrestling in China and India. I think the U.S. and Japan need to turn their eyes more on Asia. I am focused on establishing pro wrestling that can be accepted by the Asian people. McMahon's WWE would not be accepted in its current state at this time.



NW: Yes, I understand that after the WWE's success in Japan, they held shows in Malaysia and Singapore, but they were not as successful as in Japan.

AI: They did very well the first time. Japanese like new and hot events, so they brought tickets to see *SmackDown* for the first time, but what about the next time? The fans are very smart and they would not be satisfied with the same thing again. The WWE went to India and other Asian countries before. They did

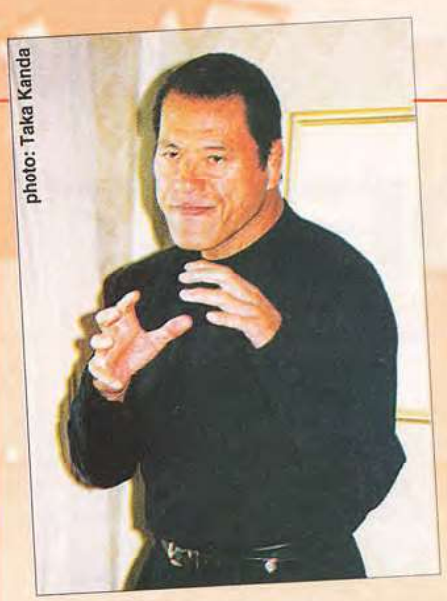


photo: Taka Kanda

good the first time, but the attendance dropped the second time. They would never take root in Asian countries.

Japanese wrestlers need to take root in those Asian countries because we relate the same way. I thought my pupils, Muto, Shinya Hashimoto, and Masa Chono would handle those things while I entered into other areas such as business and politics. Their attitudes seemed to drop from a master degree to a kindergarten level by neglecting to work toward globalization. It will take patience to cultivate and create a new style.

A globalization strategy aimed toward the American market is very difficult and needs to be done at the right time. I promoted shows at World Peace Festivals in Los Angeles and in North Korea, but could not achieve full houses due to differences with my partners. Now there are many chances for globalization, but we need to take the chance. We need to change our attitude. Opening the new Dojo is a key point. Wrestlers who come to the L.A. Dojo have the basic skills, but they will need to master how to perform and entertain people. One of the most important factors in entertainment is to surprise the audience.

NW: You have wrestled in the 1960s in Hawaii, Kansas, and Tennessee against big names, such as Destroyer, Bruiser and Gene Kiniski, and wrestled against John Tolos at the Olympic Auditorium to win UN title [one of Triple Crown championships]. Did you change your style for the American fans?

AI: Yes, because fan behavior is different. I change my style depending on what fans want. I could always instantly feel what the fans expected. My style was flexible, but I did not embrace the American wrestling style 100 percent. I still had assertiveness in my fighting style, but it was not 100 percent of the Japanese strong style either. I carried my basic style and adapted my performance to what American fans wanted.

Muto, known as Great Muta, adored the American style of wrestling and was not assertive in his own style. He set his heart on the American wrestling style and does not have an original assertion at all. If he could have asserted his own pro-wrestling style, the sport would be under his control.

NW: The Great Muta was indeed very popular among American fans, but he could have been different if he mixed his own style with the American wrestling style. How do you recall your U.S. wrestling days in the 1960s?

AI: I remember very well when I won the title teaming up with Hiro Matsuda in Tennessee. We defeated Eddie Graham and Sam Steamboat. When we won the match, fans jeered us and we felt danger as the ring was surrounded by a crowd turning into a mob. A policeman was telling me to stay in the ring and not get out. Why should I stay in the ring? I jumped out of the ring and ran to the dressing room by plowing my way through the crowds. When I reached the dressing room with relief, I realized my arms and back were bleeding. I had been cut by knives. This sort of incident happened many times in those days.

NW: Japanese wrestlers, such as Kinji Shibuya and Tojo Yamamoto, were all villains at that time. You and Hiro Matsuda were the first wrestlers to show American fans scientific wrestling as pure mat technicians. Well, time has moved very quickly. In closing, please give your message to the readers of *New Wave Wrestling*.

Inoki exhibited solid basics in this 1978 match against The Masked Superstar. photo: Tokio Tsukada

AI: Martial arts are now doing well as a business with top pro wrestlers, both men and women. It is wonderful that all these different styles are competing together and doing excellent business, such as in K1, Pride, and New Japan. I feel Japan is a great country. I am chairman of New Japan Pro-Wrestling and executive producer in Pride. When walking the streets in the U.S., fans still ask me for my autograph, and I am surprised that they know about all the latest Japanese wrestling news in detail. This is all thanks to the internet.

I believe there will come a day when Japanese pro wrestling will be introduced to American fans. At that time, there will be a large number of American wrestlers with the potential to compete in this style. I would like to launch real pro wrestling globally, it doesn't matter if it's New Japan or not. I just want to present real wrestling so that it can eventually be accepted globally. Please count on me and expect that this will happen.

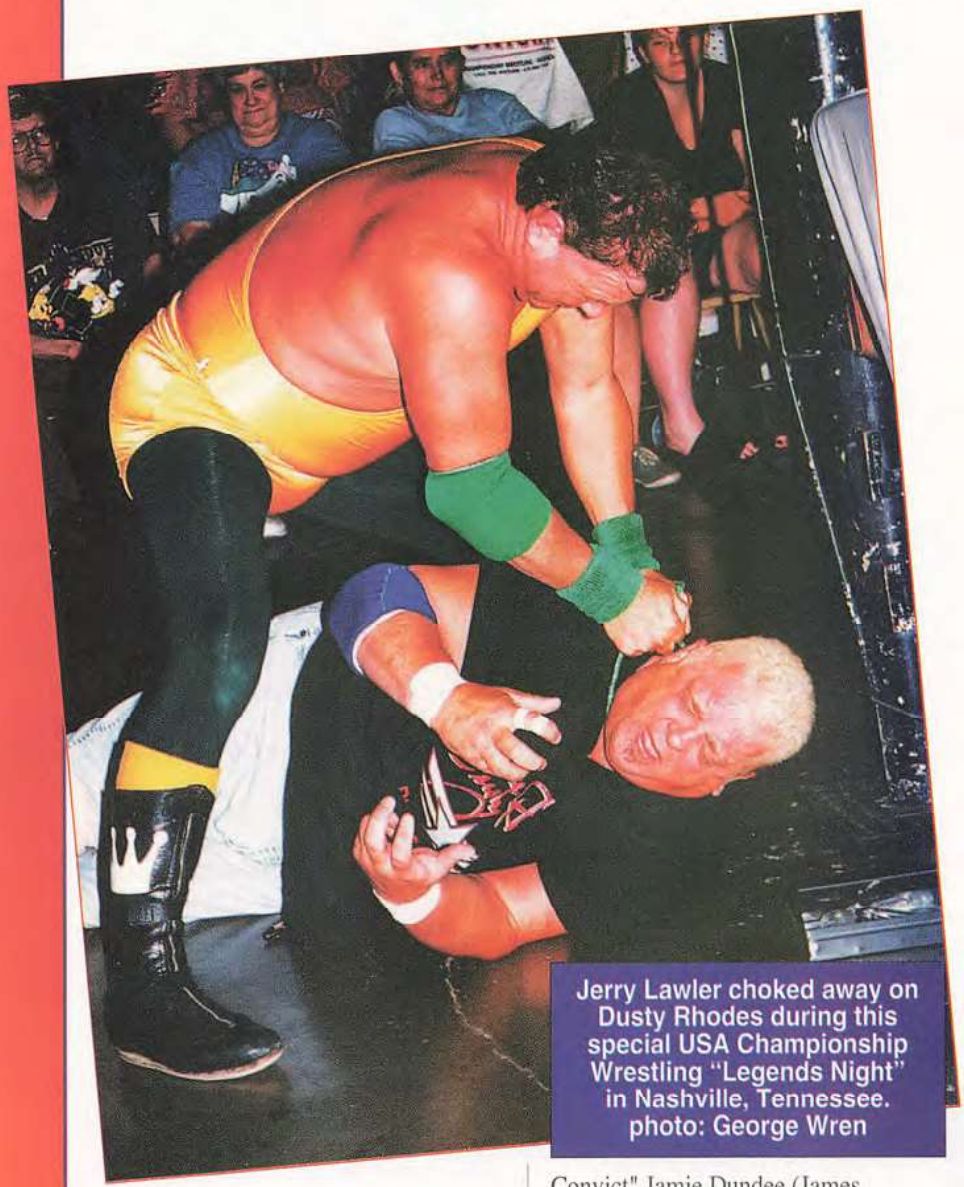
I am also truly devoted to the energy crisis these days. This new invention, a solar-energy device, would bring electricity to the Amazon, the Mexican countryside, or any remote area of the world where electricity is not available, and, of course, I would like to introduce pro wrestling to these people, too.

NW: Thank you very much for this wonderful conversation. I truly appreciate the precious time you have shared with *New Wave Wrestling*. The very best of luck to you! **NWW**

A GUT FEELING: Dusty Rhodes experienced Inoki's abdominal stretch (1979). photo: Michiaki Shimada

The INDEPENDENT Scene

compiled by George Wren & www.newwavewrestling.net



Jerry Lawler choked away on Dusty Rhodes during this special USA Championship Wrestling "Legends Night" in Nashville, Tennessee. photo: George Wren

Championship Wrestling: Promoter Jerry Lawler presents shows throughout Tennessee and tapes a weekly TV show every other Wednesday in Dyersburg, Tennessee.

Jerry Lawler —accompanied by his valet Miss Joanie—has been feuding with Billy Travis (William Joseph), managed by "Hollywood" Jimmy Blaylock. Brian Christopher (Brian Lawler) continues his heated feud with The Spellbinder (Del Rios). "The Convict" Jamie Dundee (James Crookshanks) was recently missing from mat action.

Others on the circuit include: Bill Dundee (William Crookshanks), Derrick King (Derrick Taylor), Flex (Mike Owens), Bump "N" Grind (Brian Bump & Timothy Grind), Brickhouse Brown, Beale Street Posse & manager Nate the Rat (Nathan Whitlock), Reggie B. Fine (Reginald Walt), Naughty By Nature (Rude & Tully), Seth Green, Danny B. (Danny Brown), and Tony Falk.

JWA: Bobby Idol's Jones Wrestling Alliance promotes weekly shows in Stanton, Tennessee. The Hardcore title is vacant. Billy Ray Cain is the JWA heavyweight champion and is feuding with White Lightning. Dangerous Impact—Miliki (Bobby Jones) & J-Bone (Jeremy Patrick)—have the tag belts and they are feuding with Bobby Idol (Bobby Jones) & Donnie Kelly. Koko B. Ware (James Ware) is battling with Johnny Thunder.

Others on the circuit include: Brickhouse Brown (Ronald Brown), Michael Myers (Steve Bailey), Kurt Mantel (Tony Curtis), Sir Lloyd (Lloyd Blyue), Running Cool's Tommy Knox (Chris Wiginton) & Harley D, The Medics (Bobby Idol & Don Kelly), the Scufflin Hillbillies, Rockin Reuben (Reuben Myer), Big Mo (Ben Cox), Just Josh (Josh Blyue), Sharkey Malone (Chris Cross), Jason (Chris Frazier), and Tommy Redneck (Jodi Sanders).

NWA Main Event: Promoter Mike Porter runs weekly shows in Columbia, Tennessee. John Noble & Robbie Ruffin are the NWA Mid-America tag champs. Jimmy Rave has been defending the NWA junior-heavyweight title on this circuit. Disturbing Behaviour (Jeff Daniels & Tim Renesto) are feuding with Hot Rod Biggs & Larry Valentine.

Others on the circuit include: Chris Champion (David Ashford-Smith), the Spoilers, Bart Sawyer (Steve Stewart), Big Bully Douglas, and Todd Sexton.

NWA Mid-South: Ricky Murdoch is the NWA Mid-South heavyweight champion. Gator McAllister & Renegade are the Mid-South tag-team champs. Void holds the NWA Southern junior-heavyweight crown.

Others on the circuit include: Doug Gilbert, Chris Sanders, Donnie Eaton, Blade Boudreaux (Numa Blanchard), "Bulldog" Scott Raines, and Randy Rocket (Randy Poindexter).

NWA TNA: Jeff Jarrett's new promotion is called NWA Total Nonstop Action and promotes regularly scheduled

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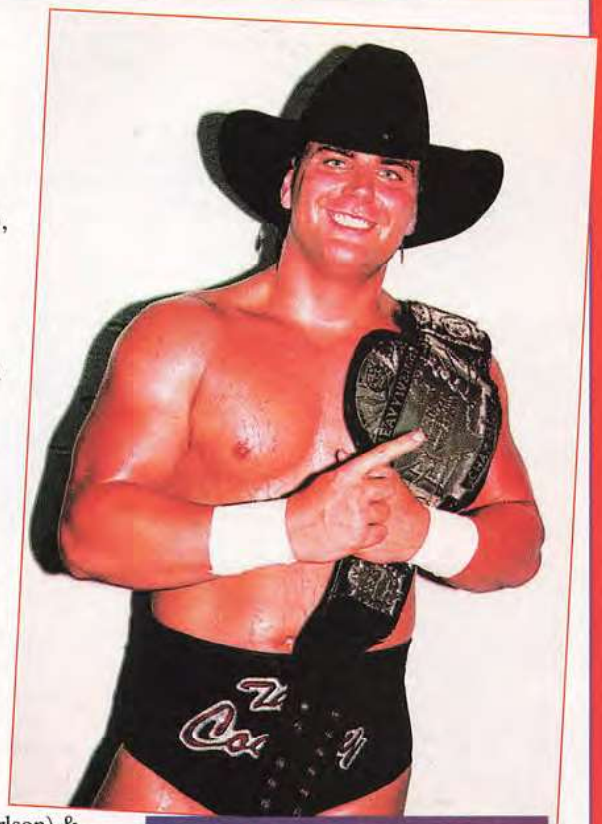
pay-per-view events.

Ken Shamrock is the NWA World heavyweight champion. A.J. Styles is the NWA TNA X-Division champ. Jerry Lynn & A.J. Styles are the feuding tag titleholders.

Others on the circuit include: Jeff Jarrett, Scott Hall, Brian Christopher (Brian Lawler), Norman Smiley, Takao Omori, the Hotshots (Chase Stevens & Cassidy O' Reilly), Bo Dupp (Murray Happer), Stan Dupp, Low Ki, the Flying Elvises (Sonny Siaki & Jorge Estrada), Malice (formerly The Wall, Jerry Tuite), "Fallen Angel" Christopher Daniels, Rick Steiner (Rick Rechsteiner), K-Krush (Ron Killings), Slash (formerly Wolfie D, Kelly Wolfe), James Storm, Gran Apollo (German Figueroa), Buff Bagwell, Father James Mitchell (formerly ECW's Sinister Minister), Blue Meanie (Brian Heffron), Ron & Don Harris, "Bullet" Bob Armstrong (Robert James), Harley Race, Dory Funk Jr., Ricky Steamboat (Richard Blood), Tempest (formerly Crowbar, Chris Ford), Joel Gertner, the Rainbow Express' Lenny Lane (Len Carlson) & Lodi (Bradley Caine), Psicosis, Konnan (Charles Ashenoff), Steve Corino, Vampire Warrior (Dave Heath), Bobcat (Cyndi Lynch), Daffney (Shannon Spruill-Ward), Francine, Elektra, and Sabu.



USACW North American champion James Storm. photo: George Wren

NWA Wildside: Adam Jacobs is the Wildside heavyweight champion. The Lost Boyz (Azrael & Gabriel) are the NWA tag-team champs. Caprice Coleman is the Wildside Television titleholder. Jimmy Rave is the NWA junior-heavyweight kingpin, and Jeremy Lopez is the NWA Wildside junior-heavyweight champion.

Others on the circuit include: New Jack (Jerome Young), the NWA Elite, Jeff G. Bailey, Tony Mamaluke (Tony Maranera), and Scoot Andrews.

TCW: Dusty Rhode's Turnbuckle Championship Wrestling holds weekly shows in Georgia. Scotty Riggs (Scott Antol) is the TCW heavyweight champ.

Athena is an exciting new slamazon making her mark in Southern rings. photo: George Wren

Sonny Siaki & Jorge Estrada are the tag champs. Dusty Rhodes (Virgil Runnels) has recently battled Scotty Riggs and Abdullah the Butcher (Larry Shreeve).

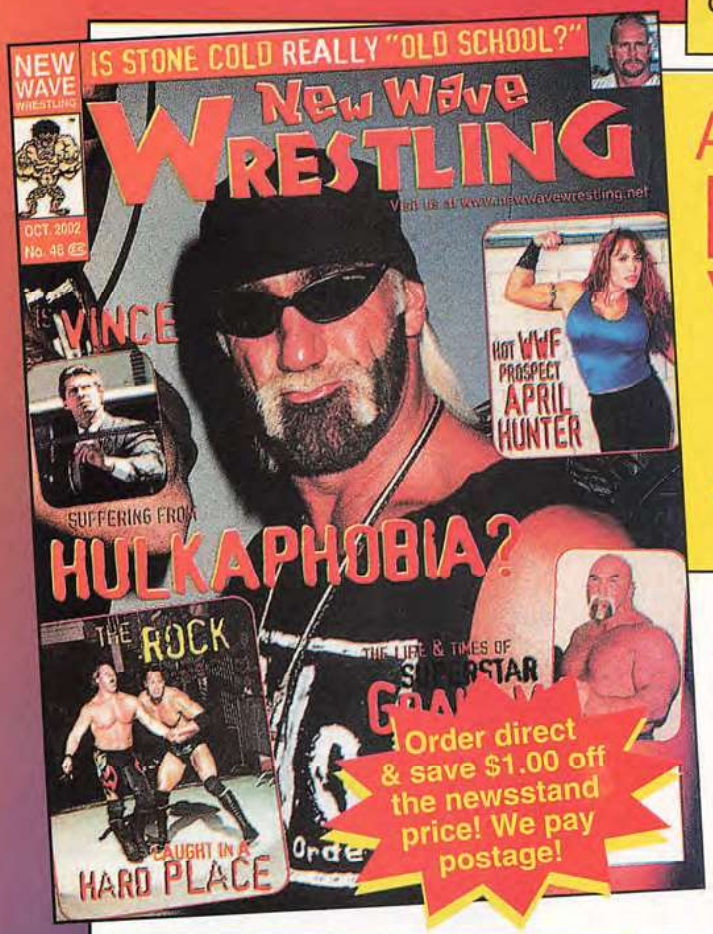
Others TCW stars include: Kim Neilsen, Jason Sugarman, Glacier (Ray Lloyd), Cooter Calhoun, "Bulldog" Scott Raines, and Luther Biggs.

WLW: Harley Race's World League Wrestling promotes in Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, and Nebraska. WLW can be seen every Sunday at noon on PAX-TV WPXS on channels 13 & 40 in St. Louis.

Superstar Steve recently returned after a tour with Japan's NOAH Promotion. Trevor Rhodes will be touring NOAH at press time.

Takao Omori (from NOAH) is the WLW Heavyweight champion. The Gold Exchange (Superstar Steve & Matt Murphy) have the tag belts. Miss Natural (Heather Mahlberg) is the WLW Women's Champion.

Others on the circuit include: Ron Powers, Ron Harris, Haku (Uliuli Fifita), Jeff Jarrett, Hellena Heavenly (Antonia Maria Galvin), Heather Savage, Malia Hosaka, Brandi Alexander, Butch (Bruce) Reed, and Drill Instructor (Dennis McHawes). NWW



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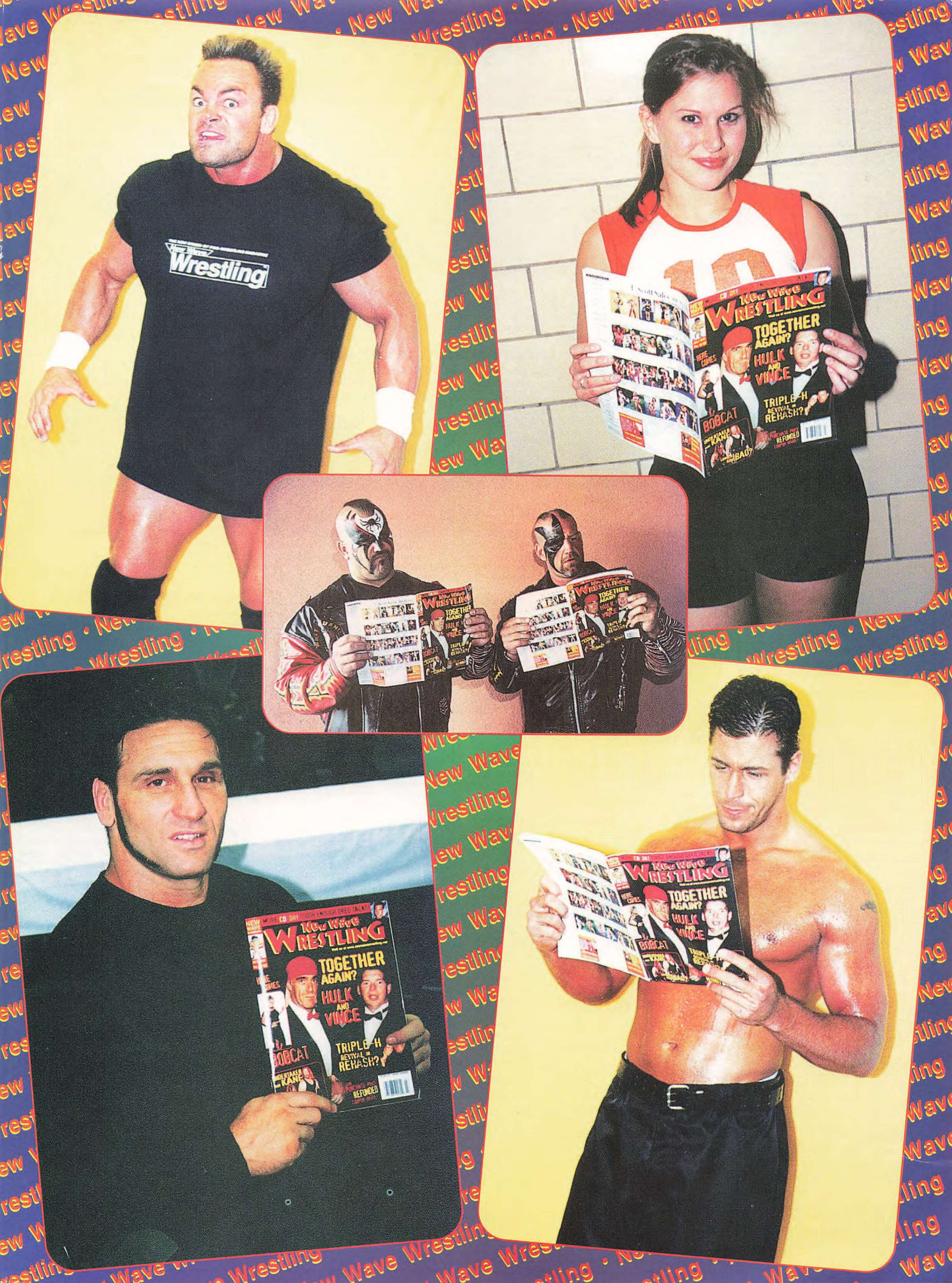
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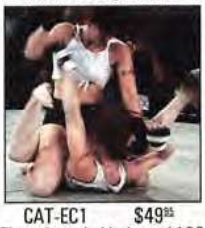

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